Charlotte, Viscountess Sundon.

Mistress of the Robes to Queen Caroline.

MEMOIRS

OF THE

COURT AND TIMES

OF

KING GEORGE THE SECOND,

AND

HIS CONSORT QUEEN CAROLINE,

INCLUDING

NUMEROUS PRIVATE LETTERS OF THE MOST CELEBRATED PERSONS OF THE TIME ADDRESSED TO THE

VISCOUNTESS SUNDON,

MISTRESS OF THE ROBES TO THE QUEEN, AND HER CONFIDENTIAL ADVISER,

EXHIBITING MUCH OF THE

ECRET, POLITICAL, RELIGIOUS, AND LITERARY HISTORY, AND A VARIETY OF PARTICULARS NOT MENTIONED BY OUR HISTORIANS.

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BY

MRS. THOMSON,

AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE OF THE DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH," "MEMOIRS OF THE COURT OF HENRY VIII." ETC.

Katherine Cyerle

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

THE materials of this Work are supplied, chiefly, from a Collection of Autograph Letters addressed to CHARLOTTE CLAYTON, VISCOUNTESS SUNDON. This Lady was attached to the Court of our first Hanoverian Sovereign, being Lady of the Bedchamber, and eventually Mistress of the Robes, to Caroline, Princess of Wales, afterwards Queen-Consort of George the Second. Lady Sundon, long before her husband's elevation to the Peerage, and whilst she retained the appellation by which she is mentioned in much of the correspondence of the day — that of Mrs. Clayton—attained such a degree of influence over her Royal Mistress, as perhaps had hardly ever been enjoyed by any female favourite since the days of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Letters given in the present Work should contain applica-

tions from individuals of every rank and profession. Nor were the higher orders among her own sex backward in soliciting her aid, or in courting—but seldom without a selfish motive—her regard.

Hence, this Correspondence acquires a considerable interest: it affords an insight into certain portions of State machinery; it shows us how family interest was applied; how the political world acted upon the religious world; and reveals the complex workings of a great social system,—at least in its details.

In the course of this Correspondence, the reader will occasionally meet with expressions which betray a nervous anxiety as to the inspection of the Post-office. Some few are written in cipher; and almost the only unguarded epistolary friend of Lady Sundon appears to have been Lord Hervey, whose favour stood so high, that he had scarcely need to fear any disclosure, and whose character for wit was such, that he could hardly forbear maintaining it. Next to the letters of Lord Hervey, those of Miss Dyves, the niece of Lady Sundon, are the most minute in their details of passing events.

Upon the state of religious opinions in the Court of Queen Caroline, and on the contending

motives of the two great parties of the day, the High and the Low Church, a good deal of additional light is thrown by the letters of Dr. Alured Clarke, of Archbishop Wake, Bishop Hoadley, Bishop Talbot, and, as far as Ireland is concerned, by those of Dr. Clayton, the Bishop of Killala. The allusions to Bishop Berkeley, in Baron Wainwright's epistles, will not be deemed uninteresting by the admirers of that amiable and gifted churchman and philosopher—so singular an example of disinterestedness in those venal times.

Upon the whole, it is impossible to read through this Correspondence without wondering at the extraordinary influence which a woman of not very exalted abilities, but of great prudence, with good fortune, attained in her day: nor is the marvel less, that her power, extending over a period of many years, and affecting, during that time, the fortunes of so many individuals, should suddenly pass into oblivion, ere the hand that had dispensed so many favours had mouldered in the grave; or the objects on whom her favour had been bestowed, had outlived the remembrance of their obligations. With Queen Caroline, when Princess of Wales, the fortunes of Lady Sundon dawned—with Queen Caroline, they set for ever.

It has been judged expedient by the Editor of these Letters to depart from the usual course pursued in similar collections, and to substitute for the elaborate, but often unread notes generally appended to each epistle, a brief memoir of the persons who happen to be either mainly concerned in the correspondence, or of the individuals to whom allusion is made.

London, *May*, 1847.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

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MEMOIRS AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

LADY SUNDON.

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CHAPTER I.

"THE history of public virtue in this country," observes Horace Walpole, referring of course to his own day, "is to be found in *Protests*." In the course of the following Memoirs and Correspondence, there will be many circumstances alluded to, if not positively stated, many characters brought forward, which will sufficiently prove that the sarcasm of the cynic was founded on an intimate knowledge of the spirit of the times.

The career of the individual who is the principal subject of these Memoirs, and to whom most of the letters in these volumes are addressed, is little calculated to raise the standard of integrity by which even the satellites of Queen Caroline are to be judged. Lady Sundon had all those courtly vices of character, possessing which a woman might still in those days be deemed respectable. No slander attached to her decorum; no whisper had ever called into question the stability of her prudence. The patroness of

what was then called the Low Church Party, and the medium of all communication between the Queen and the men of letters who sought for royal aid, Lady Sundon, if we may believe the homage addressed to her, had every saintly disposition that an angelic nature could display in woman. But this was the necessary garniture of a character destined to sway the strong intellect and great intentions of Caroline, consort of George the Second, whose patronage and confidence Lady Sundon enjoyed from the period of her first introduction into the circles of the Court, until the death of that Queen.

The family from which Charlotte Clayton, afterwards Lady Sundon, sprang, appears to have been obscure, and her condition in life humble, until after her marriage with Robert Clayton, Esq., a clerk in the Treasury. Her maiden name was Dyves; and from the letters of different members of her family, it is evident that they were in narrow circumstances, and were partly indebted to her aid for their prosperity in after times. She exercised her influence to obtain honourable employment for more than one of them. Her nieces, Frances, Dorothy and Charlotte, became attendants on the Princesses,—one of them in the capacity of maid of honour. Very soon

after her own appointment to office, we find her brother, Lewis Dyves, a cornet in the second troop of Horse Guards, while John Dyves was chief clerk in the Annuity Office; and her nephew, Jonathan, accompanied Lord Albemarle to Spain and Portugal. Mr. Clayton was descended from the Claytons of Fulwood in Lancashire, and was a near relative of the celebrated Dr. Robert Clayton, Bishop of Clogher, who will be found to figure in this correspondence very prominently.

Lord Sundon, then Mr. Clayton, had an appointment in the Treasury;* he held also the important trust of being one of the managers of the Duke of Marlborough's estates during his absence; and his wife was a correspondent and favourite of the Duchess. During the last few years of Queen Anne's life, the empire of the lofty Sarah had wholly declined, and she had been succeeded, first by the low-born Abigail Hill, her creature, afterwards Lady Masham, and, subsequently, by the haughty Duchess of Somerset, whom the Duchess of Marlborough designates in her correspondence as the "great lady." The Duke of

* In 1716, we find him filling the post of deputy auditor of the Exchequer. See *Magnæ Britanniæ Notitia*, or the Present State of Great Britain, with divers Remarks upon the Ancient State thereof. By John Chamberlayne, Esq., Fellow of the Royal Society. 1716; p. 494.

Marlborough, in his sixty-second year, and the Duchess of Marlborough, in her fifty-second, heart-sick, and disappointed, quitted the English Court in 1713, and leaving the Queen, whom they had served so long, and who refused to bid them farewell, for ever, travelled, until her Majesty's death, on the Continent. Although the general impression was that Marlborough would take that opportunity of visiting Hanover, it appears that he and his Duchess did not repair to that Court, but divided their time between Maestricht and Aix-la-Chapelle.

But notwithstanding this precaution, which was probably intended to conciliate Queen Anne, on the accession of George the First, the Duke and his Duchess once more enjoyed, to some extent, the sunshine of royal favour. On being apprized of the decline in the Queen's health, they again directed their route to England; and on the day before her Majesty's death, they arrived at Ostend, for the purpose of crossing to Dover. From this place, on the 30th of July, 1714, the Duchess of Marlborough addressed an affectionate letter to Mrs. Clayton, whom she styles her "dear friend;" an attention which augured well for the future interests of this humble, but well-qualified attendant upon the great.

It might naturally be supposed, that the Duchess of Marlborough, indignant at the ingratitude of Abigail Hill, would have hesitated before again interfering in court offices, and that her disgust of the "back stairs" intrigues would have revived upon her return to the atmosphere of St. James's. Yet such a surmise, so likely to be formed, would prove altogether erroneous. No sooner had the Duchess resumed her usual station among the nobles of her own country, than her love of faction, her busy and sarcastic nature, again came into play; it was quenched at once, however, by the coldness of George the First to Marlborough, and by the omission of his name from among the Lords Justices, who constituted the Regency.

To apologize for this insult, Baron Bothmar, the King's Hanoverian Minister, visited the Duke and Duchess at their house in St. James's. The excuses which he proffered, only added to the resentment of one of the parties to whom he addressed himself; this was the Duchess. When Bothmar had quitted the Duke of Marlborough, she threw herself on her knees before her husband, and begged of him that he would never again accept of any employment. She entreated him never more to put it into the power of any court to use him ill; at the same time, she added, for

her temper was now somewhat subdued by time, "I would live civilly with them, if they were so to me;" and she kept to her resolution.

In fulfilling this intention of "living civilly," the Duchess favoured the fortunes of one individual. She sought, and obtained from Baron Bothmar, an appointment for her friend, Mrs. Clayton; and the boon she required was probably granted willingly, as some recompence for the tacit insult to the Duke. It was that of Bedchamber-woman to Caroline, then Princess of Wales.

The character and circumstances of that amiable personage, to whom the term "Illustrious" ceases to be applied as a mere matter of form, but is bestowed in justice, demand much comment; for, without a due acquaintance with her good and bad qualities, as well as some insight into domestic affairs, at the accession of George the First, the position which Mrs. Clayton held at that Court, and the nature of the influence which she acquired, cannot be estimated; neither can the immense concealed power which she afterwards gained, and which was truly a power behind the throne, be adequately comprehended.

If we may accredit, in their fullest extent, the eulogiums of one whom the Queen Consort of George the Second favoured, her acquirements

were such as would have distinguished not only any Princess, but any *Prince* of that, or any other period. Educated by the sister of George the First, the accomplished Queen of Prussia, Caroline was indebted to that able guardian of her youth for many of those advantages of culture and precept which afterwards shone forth with so steady a light, on an admiring Court. Nature had prepared the soil in which this good seed was implanted. To a ready and quick apprehension she united a lively imagination, and, what her panegyrist* entitles, "a large compass of thought." She had a *royal* memory; not only for facts of history, and for the grave subjects which she was incessantly considering, but for the characters and merits of individuals, for personal anecdotes, for the genealogies of eminent families, both in England and on the Continent; and this gracious attribute appears to have been transmitted to her descendants, on whom it bestowed a great degree of popularity, aided by a courtesy which they may also be conjectured to have inherited from this remarkable woman, since it was not a characteristic of the Hanoverian race.

A ready discernment of character was another valuable attribute of Queen Caroline's mind. No

* Dr. Alured Clarke. See his character of Queen Caroline.

one more perfectly understood variations of manner; no one read motives more quickly; so that she was enabled to form a due estimate of those who were presented to her notice; and to avail herself of their various acquirements and tempers, according to her own conscience and pleasure.

She had gained an extensive knowledge in philosophical subjects, on which she delighted to converse with those learned men who could aid her acquisitions, by bringing new light upon her studies; the whole range of arts and sciences is said to have been compassed by her inquiring and masculine intellect; whilst to this solid superstructure, she united the lighter qualities of the mind, without which, women may be respected, but can scarcely be beloved. She excelled in conversation, and was not only profound in her reasoning, but full of vivacity. She delighted in a repartee; and, what was a proof of rare forbearance, could receive, as well as give one, gracefully.

From her skill in languages, this accomplished woman had an art of compounding words and phrases, very expressive of her ideas. Her appreciation of the importance of mirth and humour to illuminate the social hour, rendered her the life of every company in which she mingled, with the

natural grace of a woman, although never losing the dignity of a Queen.

Such were the mental attributes of Caroline; those of her heart were even still more admirable; and present, conjoined, as fine a portraiture of queenly perfection as can well be found in history.

The great beauties of her character were its gentleness, its tenderness, and its generosity. There was nothing apathetic, nothing cold in the equanimity of her temper, which was naturally so calm, as to enable her to support many trials, the existence of which even her most favoured servants never suspected. Invariably mild and courteous, alike in the reception of her brilliant Court, and in the private apartments of the palace, her habits of self restraint never counteracted the warmth of a benevolence which was directed both to friends and foes. Such a virtue, Lord Bacon remarks, "admits no excess but error." "Her natural feelings for the pains and distresses of others," observes Dr. Alured Clarke, "are not to be described." They were so strong, that she became a fellow sufferer with those who suffered, and made their cases so much her own, that it is altogether unaccountable, how one who was removed so far "out of the reach of the

common wants of life, should be more warmly touched with a sense of compassion, than is to be met with amongst persons from whose situation and circumstances we naturally expect the deepest impressions of that sort." *

Her charities were limited only by her revenue; and her income, above the expenses of her family, was laid out in employing great numbers of the poor in works of different kinds. The widows of officers and of clergymen were, especially, the objects of her bounty, which was bestowed on persons of all sects and parties; for she knew no value in money but what arises from the present use of it, and was never more obliged to any one than for a noble occasion of exerting her liberality. She understood, also, how to confer a favour with delicacy, as well as with munificence; those who applied to her on behalf of their own kindred, met with a ready sympathy in their anxieties; she answered their requests with an air of satisfaction and pleasure, which assured them that they could not recommend themselves better to her favour than by their solicitude to serve others. So unostentatious was her bounty, that many who depended upon it for their support, knew not the hand whence it came; and

* See Dr. Alured Clarke's character of Queen Caroline.

one fifth of her income was distributed in her public and private charities.

These "moral perfections" were seated in a calm and lofty mind, not easily ruffled by passion, nor taken unawares by calamity: and the same dignified character enabled the Queen to rise above the calumnies with which she was assailed; these she regarded as a tax, which those of illustrious birth must pay for their pre-eminence. Yet this reasonable way of viewing these matters was not accompanied by a disdain for the opinion of the good, whose esteem she ever courted; for, when hearing that she had been misrepresented by any whom she respected, she was wont to say she wished "they had known her better." From the injustice and ingratitude of the world, she referred herself and her cause, "with silent and humble confidence to that Being whom she made her refuge and strength."

Endowed with a wonderful command of every feeling, her capacity for enjoyment strengthened and enlarged by the constant exercise of her understanding, all intellectual sources of interest were enjoyed by the Queen with an enthusiasm, which was, at once, but little comprehended by the votaries of pleasure, or by the phlegmatic Prince to whom it was her destiny to be united.

Gay at heart,—delighting, for instance, in the society of children,—passionately fond of her own, who but ill requited her tenderness, the equable spirits of this fine, intellectual being astonished many who could not believe that they were genuine, but who attributed to dissimulation the sweetness and the dignified ease of her deportment. It was one of her observations, that her character "would never be known till after her death." She preferred the inward approbation of her own mind to the applause of the world, and discerned the true value of things; not setting upon them the price which public opinion sometimes unjustly sanctions.

Such was the mistress whom Mrs. Clayton served; and it will not easily be presumed, that a Princess, so endowed with masculine energies, and with feminine discernment, would select for her confidante, and as the distributor of her favours and charities, one of an ordinary understanding.

Mrs. Clayton is acknowledged to have been an accomplished woman; and were we to believe all the various compliments addressed to her, we should ascribe to her every virtue, and every acquirement that woman could possess. After the accession of George the Second, as we have

already said, she became the medium of all addresses to the Queen, whether they were offered up by courtiers, and sent from distant provinces, or penned by starving authors, from their garrets; or issued from the Episcopal palaces by learned Bishops; or scrawled by Lords of the Bed-chamber in the gloomy state of Kensington, or in the sleepy grandeur of Hampton Court. Voltaire even paid court to her; and the imperious Sarah of Marlborough condescended to solicit in her old age, a favour from the woman whom she had raised to power. All these letters speak of the courtesy and consideration which they received in reply. With the caution probably acquired by a courtier of many years' standing, most complaining epistles were destroyed; yet the mass of papers, consisting of seven thick volumes, from which this correspondence is selected, exhibits ample proofs of Mrs. Clayton's indefatigable attention to the wants and wishes of the applicants to her favour. Among these, we even find the mistress of George the First, the famous Madame Killmansack, from whom the following characteristic letter was received.

Madame Killmansack, created Countess of Darlington, is thus described by Walpole:—"She was corpulent and ample. Two fierce black eyes,

large, and rolling beneath two lofty arched eyebrows, two acres of cheeks spread over with crimson—no wonder that a child dreaded such an ogress!"

MADAME KILLMANSACK TO MRS. CLAYTON.

MADAM,

From a dull and silly woman, your Ladyship cannot expect a fine letter; you remember I was so last night, and that proceeds from being perpetually alone. I told you, some time since, that I could be easy if I could have a good companion with me. You know too, dear Madam, that I have a great mind to Mrs. Savie, and that I cannot have her for the pension only, that a friend of ours was so obliging as to give me hopes of. Therefore, I take the liberty to propose an expedition, by which you could make me very happy; if it can be done without giving Mrs. Clayton the least trouble—that is, to prefer the gentleman, of which name* and place is upon the inclosed paper. He will give to her 40*l.* a year as long as he enjoys, which will be as long as he lives, when he once is known, by the character they have given me of him. I am sure Mr. Clayton will thank me, being a most extraordinary accomptant, and bred up to business of that nature. That and the little pension would make Mrs. Savie live with me; but

* Mr. Camden, deceased. He was Surveyor of the Searchers in the Custom-house.

do not think I will be tormenting you every day to get things to please me. This, I own, would do it extremely. I hope you think me so reasonable as to have the same sense of your inclination towards me, whether it can succeed or not; and that nothing will lessen the value I have for your dear person, and your charming conversation.

I am, dear Madam,

Your most humble servant,

H. KILLMANSACK.

On the back of this epistle is written these significant words—"Mrs. Clayton refused to do what she desired." It was, indeed, far more Mrs. Clayton's policy to slight than to offend the favourite of the King, who was then alienated from his son.

Madame Killmansack, as she writes herself, was originally the Countess Platen, daughter of the more infamous Countess Platen, the mistress of Ernest Augustus Elector of Hanover. She accompanied his son, George the First, from the Electorate, and was afterwards, in 1722, created by him Countess of Darlington,* which title (happily) became extinct in 1730. She is described by Horace Walpole as a paragon of vulgarity and ugliness. Charlotte, the wife of the second

* Some curious particulars of this lady and her Hanoverian coadjutors at the Court of George the First will be found in the "Memoirs of Sophia Dorothea." 2 vols. 1845.

Viscount Howe, and mother of Admiral Lord Howe, was the offspring of this connexion.

On the back of the following letter is written in Mrs. Clayton's hand, "From Dr. Woodward, Physician. A very wicked bargain Sir R. Walpole made for the Bank, and for every body else." Possibly Mrs. Clayton was one of the sufferers by the bursting of the South Sea Bubble; this would account for her indignation against the minister. Other persons about the Court were more fortunate. Mrs. Clayton was at Bath, for the benefit of its mineral waters, when this letter reached her.

DR. WOODWARD TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Gresham College, Sept. 20, 1720.

Your health is of great value to all your friends as well as yourself, and I shall rejoice to hear that the Bath method comports happily with it. I was, though then in more business than usual, several times to wait upon you before you went, without the happiness of finding you at home.

Here has been a great confusion, and people in great consternation, on occasion of the great fall of the South Sea Stock. To put an end to this, here has been this day a General Court held, in which the Directors proposed the transferring 500,000*l.* stock to the Bank, as a security for their circulating three millions of South Sea Bonds, to which the Court assented,

and referred to the Directors to put the affair of the annuitants, and the third and fourth subscription, on such a foot, as to render those concerned easy. But, notwithstanding, the stock does not rise, being but 390 this evening; and there are several bankers have put a stop to their payments, and more are daily expected to do the like.

I am, Madam,
Your most faithful,
And most obedient humble servant,
J. WOODWARD.

My humble service to Mr. Clayton.

The history of the rise and fall of the South Sea scheme, has been too often written, to afford a chance of contributing anything new to that afflicting and disgraceful narrative. It will, perhaps, be sufficient to add here, that the anticipations expressed by the writer of the foregoing letter were fully realized. The magnificent bubble had burst; the stock continued to fall, and thousands were involved in ruin. The writer was well known in his day, and was sometimes styled the *curious* Dr. Woodward, from his favourite pursuit, forming a collection of curiosities in natural history, usually called the "Museum Woodwardianum." He founded a Professorship at Cambridge, to which university he bequeathed a considerable legacy. He was the author of

"Select Cases and Observations in Physic," and "A Dissertation on the Wisdom of the Ancient Egyptians." He obtained no slight addition to his celebrity, by an adventure in the public streets with the famous Dr. Mead, with whom he had been engaged in angry controversy, a statement of which is thus preserved by himself in a contemporary journal.

"On the 10th inst., [June, 1719,] about eight in the evening, passing on foot, without a servant, in the Royal Exchange, I there saw Dr. Mead's chariot, with him in it, and heard him bid his footman open the door. But Dr. Mead made no sign to speak to me, nor did I in the least suspect that he would follow me. I walked so gently, that, had he intended to have come up with me, he might have done that in less than twenty paces. When I came to the [Gresham] College gate, which stood wide open, just as I turned to enter it, I received a blow, passing, on the side of my head (which was then uncovered), and lighting upon my shoulder. As soon as I felt the blow, I looked back, and saw Dr. Mead, who made a second blow at me, and said I had abused him. I told him that was false, stepped back, and drew my sword at the instant, but offered to make no pass at him until he had drawn, in doing which he was very slow. At the moment that I saw he was ready, I made a pass at him; upon

which he retreated back about four feet. I immediately made a second, and he retired as before. I still pressed on, making two or three more passes; he constantly retired, and keeping out of the reach of my sword; nor did he ever attempt to make so much as one single pass at me.

"I had by this time drove him from the street quite through the gateway, almost to the middle of the College yard; when making another pass, my right foot was stopped by some accident, so that I fell down flat on my breast. In an instant I felt Dr. Mead with his whole weight upon me. It was then easy for him to wrest my sword out of my hand, as he did; and after that gave me very abusive language, and bid me ask my life. I told him I scorned to ask it of one who, through this whole affair, had acted so like a coward and a scoundrel; and at the same time endeavoured to lay hold of his sword, but could not reach it. He again bid me ask my life; I replied as before; I scorned to do that, adding terms of reproach suitable to his behaviour.

"By this time some persons coming in, interposed, and parted us. As I was getting up, I heard Dr. Mead, amidst a crowd of people now got together, exclaiming loudly against me for refusing to ask my life. I told him, in answer, he had shown himself a coward; and it was owing solely to chance, and not to any act of his, that I happened to be in his power. I added, that had he been to have given me any of his

physic, I would, rather than take it, have asked my life of him; but for his sword, it was very harmless, and I was ever far from being in the least apprehensive of it.

J. WOODWARD."

Gresham College, June 13, 1719.*

These angry belligerents were not only rival physicians, they were rival *virtuosi*, each having employed himself in forming a vast collection of curious things, often referred to in their day. The same fate attended both,—the auctioneer's hammer distributed their museums and libraries into a thousand different channels.

* The Weekly Journal of June 20, 1719.

CHAPTER II.

Secret of Mrs. Clayton's influence over the Queen—Sir Robert Walpole unable to withstand it—Personal advantages of Queen Caroline—Her skill in ruling her husband—Division in the Royal Family—Walpole's attachment to George the Second—His value as a statesman—Design to assassinate him—He recommends himself to the Queen—Her Majesty's religious opinions ascribed to Mrs. Clayton—High and Low Church principles—Bishop Hoadley—His literary works—Testimonies of attachment from their Majesties—His letters to Mrs. Clayton—Improper use alleged to have been made of them—The Bishop's admiration of her character—Akenside's Ode to Bishop Hoadley—Horace Walpole's high opinion of him.

CHAPTER II.

THERE was, however, another cause for the ascendancy which Mrs. Clayton acquired over the mind of her royal mistress, and retained even to the last. Amid the splendour of her existence, extolled by the majority of the good and wise, the proud mother of sons and daughters, exercising a sovereign control over her royal husband; happy in the society of the lettered and the scientific, in whose company she abandoned the state of a Queen, and conversed as an equal, Caroline had yet one gnawing apprehension at her heart. Those who are conscious of a latent, and, perhaps, mortal disease, and who seek to hide it from others, and to cover its approaches with the semblance of ease, and the cheerfulness of health, may, even in our days, easily comprehend the sufferings of one who, from a false delicacy, or a mistaken pride, endeavoured to disguise, even from her attendants, an incurable infirmity. Such was the case with one, who, trembling

through long years at the dread of any slight accident which might bring her malady into observation, could yet endanger her very existence by concealment. In the midst of gorgeous ceremonials, in the happy relaxation of her elegant leisure, the Queen must have carried the dread conviction, that she was neglecting, from reasons of policy, or from a shame inconsistent with the greatness of her views, the duty of self-preservation. One discerning eye observed her—one man, crafty as ever was politician or courtier, one who had long sought to dive into the half-suspected secret of Caroline, discovered her hidden anxiety.

Upon the death of his wife, the Queen, who was about the same age as Lady Walpole, asked Sir Robert many physical questions; but he remarked, writes his son, "that she most frequently reverted to one particular malady, which had not been the disease of Lady Walpole." "When he came home," adds the same authority, "he said to me, 'Now, Horace, I know by the possession of what secret Lady Sundon has preserved such an ascendant over the Queen.' He was in the right. How Lady Sundon had worked herself into that mystery was never known."

As Sir Robert maintained his influence over the clergy by Gibson, Bishop of London, he often

met with troublesome obstructions from Mrs. Clayton, who espoused the heterodox clergy; and he could never shake her credit. No greater proof could be offered of some strong hold over Queen Caroline's confidence, than her power of resisting the influence of Walpole,—such a power is sufficient to raise a woman from the sphere of private life to a share of political influence; nor is it reasonable to suppose that this was effected wholly by a disclosure, the secrecy of which the Queen might have ensured by favours, without retaining near her an incompetent servant, or one who was merely, as Horace Walpole has described her, an "absurd and pompous simpleton!" Yet to appreciate more perfectly the place which she held, and to prove the value of so constant a friend, and so subservient a confidante to the Queen, it will be necessary to review the state of the Court of George the Second during the long interval between the preferment of Mrs. Clayton to the service of her royal mistress, and the termination of that service by the Queen's death.

From her earliest connexion with the Hanoverian family, Caroline had been resolved to govern the Prince to whom she was affianced, in an ill assorted union, with a gentle but firm hand.

Independently of her powerful understanding, her personal advantages tended to ensure this object. She was, at the time of her marriage, extremely handsome; and, even after the ravages of the small-pox, which occurred shortly afterwards, retained a countenance replete with animation, exhibiting, at will, either mildness or majesty; "and her penetrating eyes," observes one who had often gazed upon her,* "expressed whatever she had a mind they should." Her voice was melodious, her hands were beautifully formed, and her actions were graceful.

These charms were continually acknowledged, and extolled, by the gross and illiterate monarch, who could admire the beauty of her form, and delight in her personal advantages, but who was wholly incapable of appreciating her love of letters, which he discouraged, or her generosity, which he opposed, while forcing her to bear the odium of his avarice.

The extreme devotion of the Queen to her consort has been by some ascribed to ambition,—to the love of ascendancy; others, more amiable, have ventured to couple it with affection. If we may give entire credit to the religious sentiments of Caroline, we may set it down as the effect of a

* Horace Walpole.

strong sense of duty; and, indeed, it is scarcely possible that any less cogent motive could have actuated a woman, during the course of an union of thirty years, to an incessant sacrifice of self-will, to the most deferential respect, the most entire acquiescence, than a conviction that such sacrifices were required by her nuptial bonds. "Her children," she declared, "were not as a grain of sand to her, compared with him;" and she marked these extreme notions of duty on her death-bed.

Her popularity, together with an hereditary enmity in the House of Brunswick, between the parents and their eldest sons, said to have been of older date than the reign of George the First, produced an open quarrel between the Prince of Wales and the King; divisions arose in the Court; the Whigs were split into two factions, the predominant Ministers being the Earls of Sunderland and Stanhope, who remained with the King; and the Viscount Townshend, and Sir Robert Walpole, brothers-in-law, who sided with George the Second, then Prince of Wales. Between the Earl of Sunderland and the Prince, a mortal antipathy existed; when a reconciliation between the two Courts was effected, and Walpole returned to the service of the King, Lord Sunderland, whose

father had been active in bringing about the Revolution, said to him in a tête-à-tête, "Well, Mr. Walpole, we have settled matters for the present, but we must think whom we will have next," (meaning in case of the King's demise.)

"Your Lordship," replied Walpole, "may think as you please, but my part is taken;" meaning to support the established settlement. Whilst Lord Sunderland thus took a decided line of opposition to the Prince, Lord Stanhope, who was a man of stormy passions, imbibed a hatred of the Princess. Many years afterwards, upon the death of Frederick Prince of Wales, he wrote contemptuously to Sunderland, "He had the head of his father, and the heart of his mother."

The mutual hatred of the Court factions went even farther; and, on the death of George the First, Queen Caroline is said to have discovered in his cabinet, a proposal, written by the Earl of Berkeley, then First Lord of the Admiralty, to seize the Prince of Wales and convey him to America, where he should never be heard of more.* This atrocious scheme was rejected by George the First; but the father and son were nevertheless still at open variance.

Under such circumstances, the possession of

* Horace Walpole's Reminiscences, p. 289.

such a partizan as Walpole, was of inestimable importance to the Prince of Wales and his consort. It was about the period that Mrs. Clayton first attended the Queen in the office of Bedchamber woman, that Walpolé, having been expelled the House of Commons, had taken his seat in the new Parliament, and had resumed that career which certainly owed not its greatness to elevated views or political purity; but which was conducted to the highest eminence of power, by strong practical sense, good nature, and the absence of sensibility. The merits of Walpole, his ardour, and industry, had been fully appreciated by the penetration of Godolphin, who, on his death-bed, addressed to Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, these words:—"If you ever forsake that young man, and souls are permitted to return from the grave, I will appear to you and reproach you for your conduct."

Perhaps the importance of Walpole to the Whigs, and the light in which he was regarded by the High Church party, were more fully exemplified in a design said to have been formed at this time to assassinate him; which was frustrated by his accidentally going home one night from the House of Commons in Colonel Churchill's carriage, instead of his own,—three men muffled

in black, lying in his road in wait for him. This occurred just at the time when the Bill of Pains and Penalties was to pass the Commons against Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester.

Walpole was at the period when Caroline first visited England, in the prime of life, being eight-and-thirty years of age. The coarseness of his manners, and the laxity of his morals, must, one would suppose, have been peculiarly distasteful to a Princess who was noted for her refinement and cultivation. But political interests can alter the very nature of those who fish in their deep and troubled waters. Caroline, pious, conscientious, stately, learned to endure the society of Walpole, who could with difficulty repress, in any presence, the boisterous gaiety which perpetually bordered upon licentious mirth; this was eulogized, however, as the very essence of good company, and extolled even by Pope:

> "Seen him I have, but in his happiest hour,
> Of social pleasures, ill exchanged for power;
> Seen him, encumbered of the venal tribe,
> Smile without art, and win without a bribe."

Tall, and well-proportioned in person, Walpole was at this time handsome; and, of that comeliness, traces may be found in his portraits, even at a later age; yet none of these give an impression of

the "gentleman." His eyes were, however, full of intelligence, and his features were regular.

The Minister quickly discerned the remarkable character of the Princess, whom he made it his business to conciliate. His success in this endeavour furnishes another proof of his address, and of his talents for the affairs of life. In her earliest prepossessions, Caroline had imbibed very opposite sentiments to those of the party to whom Walpole was attached. Under the guidance of Sophia Dorothea, Queen of Prussia, who, according to Horace Walpole, "lived and died an avowed Jacobite," she had learned to view that party with leniency, if not with regard, and her compassion for its sufferers was shown during the whole course of her existence. Her religious predilections, to call them by no stronger name, were, on the other hand, opposed to that moderate and politic course which Walpole, since the trial of Dr. Sacheverell, had resolved to hold; for the failure of that impeachment taught him a lesson never again to interfere in the affairs of the church. The Queen, to adopt a phrase of Horace Walpole, who valued religion, like his father, chiefly as a state engine, "was not orthodox;" she loved divinity, but had, according to him, rather weakened her faith than strengthened it—

a natural consequence of controversial studies superficially taken up, in the distractions of a court, and upon a groundwork of slight structure. This defection, as it proved to be, from the letter of the church doctrines, was imputed to the influence of Mrs. Clayton.

The parties which then agitated the Church of England with their polemical writings, differ from those of the present time only in name; and, it may be observed, in the moderation and civility of their disputes, which the influence, perhaps, of a more truly religious spirit than that which existed in the days of George the Second, has tended, latterly, greatly to soften. The schism was equally notorious—the differences were alike openly avowed. Like everything else, in those times, religious discussions partook of the nature of political faction. In our own day, politics and religion may be dissevered: in the last century, they were firmly united. The High Tory was High Church: the Low Church were generally Whigs.

Two prelates, eminent in their lives, were the devoted friends of Mrs. Clayton, even during her comparative obscurity. One of them, Dr. Hoadley, Bishop of Winchester,* exerted a strong influence

* Successively of Bangor, Hereford, Salisbury, and Winchester.

over her religious opinions; the other, Robert Clayton, Bishop of Killala, the kinsman of her husband, owed much of his advancement to her interest with Queen Caroline.

Hoadley was, soon after the accession of George the First, preferred to the Rectory of Streatham, Surrey. He was all his life a cripple, using a cane whenever he appeared in public, and crutches at home, and always preached, kneeling on a stool. His constitution was so feeble, that he was thought by all the faculty to be sinking into a consumption, until between the age of thirty and forty, when his circumstances enabling him to take carriage exercise, his health improved, and he lived to an advanced age. Like many other eminent men, Bishop Hoadley was the son of a schoolmaster; his father being a man of great acquirements, who published a work on the natural method of teaching: but whose merits never raised him to any preferments in the Church, although an excellent scholar and critic. His son ran a much more fortunate, though perhaps not a happier career.

Soon after the arrival of the Prince and Princess of Wales in England, Dr. Hoadley was appointed one of the King's chaplains, having been previously strongly, though ineffectually, recom-

mended to the patronage of Queen Anne by a vote of the House of Commons. In 1715, he was appointed to the Bishopric of Bangor, when he went to Court to kiss hands. On that occasion, he did not know the way up stairs; but remained, such was his ignorance and simplicity, in an outer room until conducted into the presence.

The course of a long life was devoted to the most voluminous works it is possible to suppose ever to have been penned by one individual; fifty separate performances being recited by his biographer,* besides assistance given by the Bishop to Sir Richard Steele in the Crisis and other works. These are all stated to have been written in defence of religious liberty; and "he was happy," relates his panegyrist, "to live long enough to reap the full earthly reward of his labours—to see his Christian and moderate opinions prevail over the kingdom, both in church and state,—to see the Non-conformists at a very low ebb, for want of the persecution and opposition they were too much used to experience from both, many of their ministers desiring to receive their ordination from his hands, — to see the general temper of the clergy entirely changed, the bishops preferring few or none of intolerant principles, and the clergy claiming no inherent

* Dr. Samuel Clarke.

authority, but what is the natural result of their own good conduct as individuals in the discharge of their duty." Such are the benefits imputed to the indefatigable pen, and busy life of this prelate. As to the value of these — opinions, not wantonly to be challenged, will necessarily vary— and it becomes a question to the minds of those who recal the long continuance of the state of apathy which succeeded that rife disunion in the church, which prevailed in the time of Dr. Hoadley, and which gave its impulse to his famous Bangorian controversy, whether controversialists of *any* school of doctrines, or controversies however well intended, are really beneficial to religion.

Dr. Hoadley is declared, however, to have abstained from all "railing and misbecoming flights, or those sallies of passion, which, as they give no strength to a bad argument, never add any grace or advantage to a good one." Unlike Dr. Priestley, an amiable and gentle man in private life, who, when he wrote, dipped his pen into gall, Hoadley retained in the dangerous trial of disputation the meekness of the Christian.

These merits, however differently they may be viewed in the present day, were rewarded with almost unbounded royal favour, both from George the Second and his Queen. From the former, he

received a written testimony of approbation, expressive of the King's gratitude for Dr. Hoadley's services to his family, and of affection both to his principles and his person, alluding, doubtless, to Hoadley's celebrated address to Bishop Atterbury, and to his still more famous work, entitled, "Reasons against Receiving the Pretender, and Restoring the Popish Line." Yet the Doctor's fame did not escape the attacks of an opposing party; and it was deemed necessary, by his son, to add a Supplement to the article on this celebrated divine in the Biographia Britannica, vindicating the Bishop from a biography which was "very unworthy, and much to the disgrace of his character."

"On the accession of King George the Third to the crown," says a laborious antiquary, "all the bishops paid their congratulations to him in person, except Hoadley and Sherlock, who, on account of their great age and infirmities, wrote humble letters to his Majesty, pleading the same in excuse for not personally attending at Court. The King, in return, charged Secker with his message to Hoadley, and which he accordingly delivered, signifying that his Majesty accepted of the excuse, and had a just value and esteem for his *character*. Hoadley, somewhat surprised at his

character being particularly mentioned, inquired of the Archbishop, whether that was the King's *express* message? to which Secker replied in the affirmative, with the addition, that he could assure his Lordship that the King did say so, and that his Majesty was no hypocrite. A certain dignitary soon after called upon Hoadley, and the Bishop told him of his late visitor and message, with this remark, that he believed all that the Archbishop had told him; "for no man," said he, "understands hypocrisy better than Archbishop Secker."*

The familiar correspondence of most celebrated persons has been justly regarded as an index to the general character of their minds; and the filial affection of the Bishop's son induced him to add to his vindication of his father certain epistles, addressed to Mrs. Clayton, who is denominated by the writer of the vindication, "the prudent and amiable Lady Sundon."† "It is to be lamented," observes the biographer, "that none of this lady's share of the correspondence is preserved; and indeed his lordship's letters were brought to light by mere accident, none of them

* Nichols' Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century. Vol. iii. p. 481.

† See Works of Bishop Hoadley, collected by his Son. Preface. Vol. i. p 5.

having been restored to his hands during his life." He had been uneasy at hearing, shortly before his death, that they were extant, and he was especially uneasy with regard to some of them, in which he had given his opinion of men and things in terms too unguarded for the public eye; and, accordingly, he used all honourable means to recover them, but in vain.

This gentleman, the Rev. Dr. John Hoadley, Chancellor of Winchester, in a letter to the Rev. Dr. Birch, dated December 2, 1764, says, "I had like to have forgotten to ask, whether you remember a letter published (with his name I think) by the Bishop in the public papers, about his opinion against persecuting authors or printers, whatever their abuse of him should be; though I myself am the subject of every 'Saturday's Paper,' is something like the expression. I find more of that matter in one of his letters to Lady Sundon. Was it not after his 'Political Tract on the conduct of Great Britain'? These letters of the Bishop's were sent me by an honest Welsh parson, Mr. Miles, of Cambridge, whose sister was married to the sorry attorney, Mr. Case, who would have terrified the Bishop out of preferment, by threatening to publish them. This gave my Lord some uneasiness, till he was assured by Bishop

Green of Lincoln, and Dr. Chapman, Master of Magdalen (who had read them more than once) that there was nothing in them that even he need be ashamed of."*

In another place, Dr. Hoadley alludes to his Lordship's correspondence, as discovering "more of his private character than can be seen in his works * * * particularly his more intimate sensibility of real friendship, and the unreserved intercourse of minds truly virtuous, and confident of each other."†

With regard to the charge against Mr. Case, the owner of the Sundon letters, of terrifying the Bishop out of preferment, by threatening to publish them, it is very clear from the after opinion expressed of them by his son, that there was nothing in them to cause his lordship any uneasiness, or to create in "the sorry attorney" the slightest hope of gaining anything by such a menace. We believe Dr. Hoadley was mistaken in attributing such an object to Mr. Case.

These letters, allowing much for the exaggerated complimentary style of the period, are the effusions of a friendship, which seems to have bordered on

* Nichols' Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century. Vol. iii. p. 298.

† Works of Bishop Hoadley, published by his Son. 3 vols. fol. 1773.

the most romantic and enthusiastic attachment. They increase in the fervour of their expressions. In August, 1715, the Bishop, then Rector of Streatham, writes:—"If ever I forget my obligations to you or Mr. Clayton, and particularly if I ever forget the fortnight at Sundon Hall, which I protest to you I think was the most perfect, and most agreeable composition of good sense and good manners, and freedom of conversation, that I ever so much as hoped to meet with in this world, may you forget that there is such a place as Streatham, or such a person as

Your most obliged and most obedient servant,
BENJ. HOADLEY."

Such was the devotion to Mrs. Clayton of one whose merits have been honoured by an elaborate eulogium by Akenside, who has extolled, in his "Ode to the Bishop of Winchester," a divine whose sentiments and disposition so much resembled his own; and paid a long tribute to "Hoadley's rising name."

"O never, Hoadley, in thy country's eyes,
May impious gold, or pleasures' gaudy prize,
Make public virtue, public freedom vile;
Nor our own manners tempt us to disclaim
That heritage, our noblest wealth and fame,
Which thou hast kept entire from force and factious guile."

"The high spirited, eloquent, and virtuous Hoadley," says an esteemed writer, "gives the most pleasing instance of enthusiasm that is to be found in the annals of the world. Though plunged in controversy for a course of years, and the victim of those 'iræ' which do somehow or other take a fancy to the '*animâ cælestes*,'—though haunted by the obloquies of the Tory and the Jacobite, he survived every tempest, and closed his life in the revered simplicity of his native character, and in the possession of so unimpaired a capacity, that in a very advanced age, when the faculties are in general depressed, if not impaired, he had all the acuteness of the reasoning power, and all the vigour of that intellectual spirit which had vindicated the cause of liberty, so well displayed in the masterly detection of a cheat who had forged his name. Here I cannot forbear to recommend, in defiance of Dr. Johnson, an Ode of Dr. Akenside in honour to this prelate—an ode which the defamer of this poet's lyric powers had not the power to write." *

To this we add the opinion expressed of him by a writer who was rarely over liberal with his praise. "He will be known by his writings,"

* Nichols' Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century. Vol. i. p. 129.

says Horace Walpole, "and as long as a churchman combating for the liberties of mankind shall be an unusual phonomenon."*

* Memoirs of George the Third. Vol. i. p. 60.

CHAPTER III.

Bishop Hoadley introduces Sir Richard Steele to Mrs. Clayton —Their intimacy—A work by the Bishop published by him under Steele's name—Swift's sarcastic allusion to this—Steele's defence of himself—His errors—His religious treatise called "The Christian Hero"—His letter to Mrs. Clayton requesting her influence with the Princess of Wales in his behalf—His appointment from the Crown—His Fishpool project—His reverses of fortune—Other letters to Mrs. Clayton urging his distress—He is attacked by paralysis—His death—Remarks on Mrs. Clayton's patronage of Steele.

CHAPTER III.

It appears probable, that through Bishop Hoadley, Steele was introduced to the good offices of Mrs. Clayton, and to the patronage of the Queen. The well-known participation of Dr. Hoadley in Steele's paper of the Crisis, and the still more remarkable circumstance of Hoadley's publishing a work under the name of Steele, show how intimate was their connexion. The tract thus strangely fathered upon another, is entitled "A large Dedication to the present Pope, Clement XI., giving him a particular Account of the State of Religion among Protestants, and of several other matters of importance to Great Britain; signed Richard Steele." This grave and admirable piece of humour, is stated to have given offence to Dean Swift, who considered that his province of wit was invaded; and the little envy of that narrow spirit was stimulated to expend itself in

these bitter lines upon Steele's retirement from his offices:—

> "So Steele, who owned what others writ,
> And flourished by imputed wit,
> From perils of a hundred jails,
> Withdrew to starve, and die in Wales."

At the time when Mrs. Clayton's influence at Court commenced, Steele seems to have been in the utmost penury and distress. Already had he encountered all those various vicissitudes of fortune, which may, perhaps, tend to heighten genius, and to strengthen, rather than depress its efforts. Like Farquhar, Steele had cherished an unfortunate predilection for a military life, giving up an Irish estate, the succession of which he lost by accepting a commission in the Horse Guards, and thus displeasing his friends. In after life, when attacked by the calumnious pen of Dennis, for his suspected low birth, Steele thus defended himself, writing as of an indifferent person:—

"It may, perhaps, fall in my way to give an abstract of the life of this man, whom it is thought thus necessary to undo and disparage. When I do, it will appear, that when he mounted a war horse with a great sword in his hand, and planted himself behind King William the Third against Louis the Fourteenth, he lost the succession to a

very good estate in the county of Wexford in Ireland, from the same humour which he has preserved ever since, of preferring the state of his mind to that of his fortune. When he cocked his hat and put on a broad sword, jack-boots, and shoulder belt, under the command of the unfortunate Duke of Ormond, he was not then acquainted with his own parts, and did not then know he should ever have been able (as he has since appeared to be in the case of Dunkirk), to demolish a fortified town with a goose-quill;" alluding to his famous paper in the Guardian upon the demolition of Dunkirk.

During the latter part of Queen Anne's reign, Steele had encountered the utmost virulence of the Ministry. Being obliged to resign his situation in the Stamp Office, and to give up a pension which the Queen had allowed him as a former servant of Prince George of Denmark, he was thrown upon the mercy of his creditors by his expulsion from the House of Commons for writing "Seditious and scandalous libels." Steele, it is surmised, had courted this extremity, and "obtained," as Dean Swift described it, "the honour, as another of their haughty leaders had done (alluding to Walpole), of being expelled the House." The publication of the Englishman and also of the

Crisis, of which Hoadley was, at least the adviser, were the ostensible causes of this proceeding.

The gay heart of the admirable dramatist was, for once, almost broken by the distress which followed the loss of his employments. He occupied himself, indeed, with a project of writing the life of the Duke of Marlborough, from authentic documents; but Marlborough was not a liberal patron, the scheme languished, and the materials were afterwards returned to the Duchess, who by her will designed them to be formed into a biography, and left a thousand pounds for that purpose, which was never fulfilled.

Meantime, immediately before the accession of George the First, Steele, little sobered by the approach of middle life, was taught a severe lesson in his adversity. He was one who never made a provision for the reign of that "stern rugged nurse," nor learned wisdom from her instructions. His feelings were most benevolent, but his bounty was generally indulged at the expense of his creditors: his conversational talents, which are described by those who knew him to have been of the most varied and fascinating description, were sometimes employed in enhancing pleasures ruinous to his fortunes, and bitter on after reflection. His great flow of good nature,

his open, generous spirit, and his sparkling wit, had rendered him the darling of his brother officers, during his short military career. But, they had also betrayed him into society in which the strength of his faith, and the purity of his conduct, were undermined, sullied, and lost. Whatever were his errors in conduct, unlike many other great, but dissipated authors, his pen was never employed to palliate those errors. It was always devoted to the cause of virtue in her fairest aspect, and ever lent its aid to religion.

A little treatise, entitled "The Christian Hero," said to have been composed by him in order to be a check upon his own passions, was written several years prior to publication. Such is Steele's own declaration. When an ensign in the Guards, he wrote the work, in order "to fix upon his mind a strong impression of virtue and religion, in opposition to a stronger propensity to unwarrantable pleasures." He therefore, at last, printed the book with his own name, "in order that a testimony against himself, and fixing the eyes of his acquaintance upon him in a new light, might make him ashamed of understanding, and of seeming to feel, what was virtuous, and of living so contrary a life." This, he relates, had no other good effect than that, from being hitherto

considered no undelightful companion, he was soon reckoned "a disagreeable fellow." One or two of his acquaintance thought fit to misuse him, and to try their valour upon him; and everybody chose to measure his actions by the test of those principles which he had put into the Christian Hero.

His political writings were, however, the more immediate causes of Steele's incessant vicissitudes; for his carelessness in morals, and levity of conduct, never seem to have proceeded from a depraved heart. Often warned in vain by Addison, he was ungovernable in those respects. "We never," he observes, referring to that friendship between him and his old schoolfellow, "had any difference but what arose from our different way of pursuing the same thing: the one, with patience, foresight, and temperate address, always waded and stemmed the torrent; while the other often plunged himself into it, and was as often taken out by the temper of him who stood weeping on the bank for his safety, when he could not dissuade him from leaping into it."

That Steele, before the arrival of Queen Caroline in England, and his introduction to her favour, was overwhelmed by the "torrent," is evident from the following touching letter, acknowledging kind-

ness received, and pleading for favours to come. The letters are dated immediately after the accession of George the First.

SIR RICHARD STEELE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Oct. 14th, 1715,—St. James's Street.

MADAM,

I receive, as I ought, the great condescension in my favour from a person whom I will not take the liberty to name: it would have been more surprising to me than it was, if I had not always thought anything heroically good was to be expected from thence.

I will not proceed in the affair of the Charterhouse, except I have the direct promise of the majority; though had not I been influenced, as I am now, with the most entire resignation to the rule you have given me, I should have taken a pleasure to perplex those who have a great mind to be artful, and of whom Providence has taken so great care, that it will not let them be anything at all, if they are not honest.

I sincerely assure you, that I do not seek this station upon any other lien but to do good to others; and if I do not get it, you will see my opposers repent that they would not let me be humble; for I shall then think myself obliged to show them what place among mankind I am really in, and how useful I can be to the family

to whose service I have devoted my life and fortune.

I am, Madam, your most obliged
and most obedient humble servant,
RICHARD STEELE.*

At the time that this letter was written, Steele was conducting the paper, called the Reader, and several other periodicals, in the same spirit, in opposition to the Examiner. The death of the Queen silenced, for a while, the pen of faction; but Steele, as well as others, very soon experienced the benefit of Whig principles. Almost immediately after the accession of George, he was made surveyor of the stables at Hampton Court—a strange office for an essayist; and he obtained a patent from his Majesty making him chief manager of the Royal Company of Comedians. It was, possibly, by the suggestion of Steele, that Wolsey's noble hall at Hampton Court was made into a theatre, and used occasionally as such, by the Royal Company, until 1798. His appointment is said to have been con-

* Mr. Nichols edited Steele's Letters, in 2 vols. small 8vo, under the following title, "The Epistolary Correspondence of Sir Richard Steele; containing Letters to his second wife, Mary Scurlock, and her two daughters, now first printed from the Originals, which are deposited in the British Museum. Also Letters to and from his friends and patrons." 1788.

ferred chiefly through the instrumentality of the Duke of Marlborough; but it was regarded by Steele as his due, he having by his writings in the Tatler, according to Colley Cibber, "often filled the theatres."

From this period, for several years, Steele's career was prosperous. He was knighted in 1715, and rewarded for various services, by Sir Robert Walpole, with the donation of 500*l.* His pen was still active; and such was the popularity of his character, that being sent to inquire into the state of the forfeited estates in Scotland, he fascinated even the haughty Jacobites, and the stiff presbyterians by his address. In Edinburgh he studied low life practically, by assembling at a feast all the beggars, poor people, and poor decayed tradesmen he could assemble. "I have been amply repaid," he afterwards observed, "for my outlay; for besides the pleasure I have felt in feeding the hungry, I have studied character enough to make a good comedy." His description of one Hart, a Presbyterian Minister, is humorous. He used to call this reverend personage, "the Hangman of the Law," for he had fallen into a peculiar way of denouncing from the pulpit the terrors of the law, and uttering anathemas without limit or reserve.

In the midst of his credit at Court, Steele was often in the greatest exigencies, notwithstanding that he had contrived, in a second marriage, to marry a rich wife—reversing the usual order of things—a first marriage being often one of interest, and the second one of love. His famous Fish-pool project, a scheme which sounds strangely, as proceeding from the author of that exquisite play, "the Conscious Lovers," was the result of his necessities. This was a plan, calculated, in Steele's sanguine expectations, "to put a man in possession of a much larger income than any man living has merit to deserve." He got a patent for the invention, and was at a great expense in constructing a vessel, in which there was a pool, supplied with a continual stream of water, to keep the fish alive in their transit. This plan, when salmon was enormously dear in London, might have answered, had the fish themselves approved it. But, not liking the confinement, they battered themselves on the sides of their pool, or reservoir, so as to be of little value when brought into the market.

This failure was severely felt, for it was accompanied by another misfortune. In those venal days, a political writer was but a slave. Steele ventured to oppose the famous Peerage Bill:

the Court took a mean revenge, and revoked his licence for acting plays, rendering his patent also ineffectual. The broken-spirited man still struggled with his destiny; and, under the most painful circumstances of difficulty, and the most degrading necessity of evasions and expedients, composed the "Conscious Lovers." That comedy, interesting at once the heart, and delighting the imagination, stayed, for awhile, the ruin which ensued. An ill-starred lawsuit, however, hastened the falling stone down the precipice; and during these calamities, the following letter was addressed to Mrs. Clayton, in the hope—which appears not to have been a delusive one—that her former good offices might again avail.

SIR RICHARD STEELE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

May, 1724.

MADAM,

You will, I hope, forgive that I take the liberty, as I am bereft both of limbs and speech, to address the enclosed petition to your care. You have language in perfection, but I know, more for your friends than yourself. I beg the favour of you to obtain of her Royal Highness her pleasure herein, and you will infinitely oblige,

Madam, your most obedient
and most humble servant,
RICHARD STEELE.

The appeal to Mrs. Clayton was not entirely in vain, as may be gathered from the following acknowledgment:—

SIR RICHARD STEELE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

May 27th, 1724.

MADAM,

It was with the greatest confidence and gratitude that I received your message yesterday, and after such a remarkable change, by reason of sickness, and all other kind of misfortune, I cannot but acknowledge to you, your generosity in espousing the cause of so neglected a creature as I am, was the more surprising. It is the greatest happiness that tempers like yours can be reared in courts, and I acknowledge to you, let her Royal Highness do as she pleases, her doing anything will be a great bounty to a man, who has neglected himself to the most deplorable condition, and hopes only to let his children know their fortunes, and live in a more regular economy and guard for the future.

I am, Madam, your most obedient,
and devoted humble servant,
RICHARD STEELE.

This allusion to his children, and his intention of repairing, in their education, the errors of his own, is very characteristic.

But the shattered frame could contend no

longer with fortune. Worn out by incessant mental labour—a stimulus, healthful in moderation, destructive in excess—Steele was, in 1726, attacked by paralysis. He lingered three years in retirement, at Languanor, near Carmarthen; and dying, in 1729, he left behind him that character, which redeemed a thousand errors — of being a friend to the friendless, and a father to the orphan. His were the faults which punish themselves; and for which a Judge, merciful, yet "strict to mark," appears, to our finite comprehension, to allot a retribution while in life. He was buried by his own desire, in the parish church of Carmarthen, far from the scenes of his early career of mingled triumphs and distresses. Yet Westminster Abbey holds the ashes of few men who have done more to enhance the love of virtue, and to refine the social feelings. The patronage of such a man as Steele, reflects honour upon Mrs. Clayton, whilst to raise her in the scale of opinion, the friendship of the elevated and learned, as well as of the humble and impoverished, was not wanting.

CHAPTER IV.

Talbot, Bishop of Oxford—His improvident habits—His letter to Mrs. Clayton on the accession of George the First—The Bishop takes a desponding view of the prospects of England —His complimentary letter to her on her appointment—His letter respecting Dr. Samuel Clarke—Biographical notice of that divine—His works—His religious opinions—Schism in the Church of England—Mrs. Clayton and her Royal Mistress embrace the new doctrines—Dr. Clarke refuses the sacrament to Sir John Germaine—Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury—His letter to Mrs. Clayton recommending Mr. Echard—The Archbishop and Bishop Hoadley —The former opposes the Arians—Contemplates uniting the Churches of England and France—His letters to Father Courayer.

CHAPTER IV.

Among the earliest episcopal correspondents of Mrs. Clayton, we find Talbot, Bishop of Oxford, and afterwards of Durham, and father of the Lord Chancellor Talbot. This prelate was the kinsman and friend of Charles Talbot, Duke of Shrewsbury, who received the Sacrament from his hands on his death-bed, after having renounced the Roman-Catholic faith. Mr. Talbot succeeded Dr. Hicks, who was ejected from his Deanery of Worcester, in 1691, on his refusing to take the oaths to the Government of William and Mary. In June of the same year, he received the diploma of Doctor of Divinity from Archbishop Tillotson, and became so admired as a preacher, that he was frequently commanded to preach before the Queen. On the death of Dr. Fell, he was promoted to the Bishopric of Oxford. On the accession of George the First, he was appointed Dean of the Chapel Royal. He was afterwards promoted to the See of Salisbury, on the death of

Bishop Burnet; and, eventually, to that of Durham. He was a man of improvident habits, and in spite of his preferments, was often forced to apply to his son, the Chancellor, to release him from difficulties. The following letter, written before the accession of George the First, exhibits a curious picture of his sentiments upon the supposed danger of the Stuart Dynasty being restored, or rather prolonged after Anne's death. Towards the conclusion, he has recourse to cypher, which shows that the Bishop and his fair correspondent were already extremely confidential.

TALBOT, BISHOP OF OXFORD, TO MRS. CLAYTON.

July 10, 1714.

MADAM,

I acknowledge with much thankfulness the favour of your last. You will believe that you needed not to have made an excuse for the subject of it, when I assure you that I hear so little, (there being very few that I think worth the while to correspond with) that no news can be stale to me, and the most trifling town chat must be an agreeable diversion to us in this place, where our whole conversation turns only upon one melancholy topic, that of the miserable circumstances of our poor country.

For my own part, I should be ready to lay hold on any twig to bear up my sinking spirits; but upon a serious consideration of the state of

affairs, both abroad and at home, I conclude that nothing can save us but some wonderful interposition of Providence. Can any one doubt but our good new ally will bestow a King upon us whenever he can? And what should hinder him? He is now more powerful than ever. We have lost our old allies and friends, by basely betraying them; we have no forces of our own to oppose him, but a strong party among us ready to join him. In these circumstances, what can votes and addresses (however honestly designed by some), signify? I wish you do not find that through the artifices of 73 they are as mere amusements, as the differences between 61 and 62; which I told 60 in my last, I thought were like the quarrelling of two fencers upon a stage, designs only to delude and cheat the people.

You will fancy I am far gone in the spleen; I wish you could send me a remedy; a little good news would soon dispel my vapours: but alas! from what quarter can one expect it? however, be so charitable as to write (whenever it is not very inconvenient to you,) such news as you hear. Pray what account have you of 50 and 60? It is confidently said that 49 and 59 will shortly C 77. I should still have some hopes, if that news were as true, as it is, that 72 has the justest value and sincerest friendship for 70 and 71.

The next epistle affords a specimen of the flattery of this somewhat cringing Bishop; the

"glorious Edward," being, of course, George the First; and "the Black Prince," George the Second: Queen Caroline, "our blessed" Queen Mary revived. This letter is not dated, but of course is written in the reign of George the First.

TALBOT, BISHOP OF OXFORD, TO MRS. CLAYTON.

My Dear Friend,

When I sent my servant with my sermons to your house, I ordered him to inquire whether you or Mr. Clayton was at home, intending to have taken my leave of you before I left the town. You know that my circumstances will not allow me to make a long stay in it at any time. I was, indeed, at the length of my short time, or I would have given myself the honour of paying my duty to the Court on the Prince's birthday. I can now go to that place with pleasure and admiration. I see in the King and his Royal Highness, our glorious Edward, and the Black Prince; and in her Royal Highness, our blessed Queen Mary revived.

May it not be too great a presumption in me to beg that I may be represented to your gracious mistress by you, as one of the most faithful servants of their royal family. I say by you, whose steady adherence to the interest of the illustrious house, in the worst of times, has justly recommended you to the honour you now enjoy. Upon

which, if I durst, I would congratulate not only yourself, but also the Princess, who, I am sure, will not be disappointed in anything she can expect from a pious, prudent, and faithful servant.

Favour me, I beseech you, with frequent accounts of the health and prosperity of the royal family, and add, thereby, to the obligations you have already laid on your

faithful friend, and humble servant,

W. Oxon.

In the year 1731, he published twelve of his sermons in one volume, 8vo.; in several he chose to advocate the opinions of Dr. Samuel Clarke upon the Trinity. The Bishop, indeed, was so attached to Dr. Clarke, as to have lamented that his refusal to subscribe to the Articles prevented his bestowing upon him the best preferment at his disposal.

"It is remarkable of this prelate," observes an esteemed antiquary, "that in nine years' time he disposed of all the best livings in his patronage, both his archdeaconries and half the stalls in his cathedral; and it has been hinted, that he did not come to this opulent See without submitting to a *douceur* of six or seven thousand pounds."*

The following letter relates to Dr. Samue

* Hutchinson's History of Durham. Vol. i. p. 573.

Clarke, whose cause Mrs. Clayton had, it appears, espoused:—

TALBOT, BISHOP OF OXFORD, TO MRS. CLAYTON.

June 11, 1714.

MADAM,

Your last has very well satisfied me that you have not forgotten your promise to your humble servant. I wish you were as well satisfied that he is not unworthy of the favour, since he did not acknowledge it by the first post. But the true reason of that was, that, since it was not possible for me to obey your commands relating to your friend,* in the letter of them, I was willing to do all I could to comply with the spirit of them; and I lost a post on that account. Your friend will be informed, by one to whom I have this day sent, something which I hope may be for his service.

The first news in your letter is very different from what I had from other hands, who told me that† 15 was 30, and that, in one revolving moon, 5 would be 31; which intelligence, if true, time will show. I cannot be so sanguine as to expect any good from 61. I wish 7 and 75 are not bit. One thing I must tell you, which was committed to me in confidence by a very knowing person, that 9 was very mercenary; if that blind side is found out, it may account for a conduct otherwise

* "The friend was Dr. Samuel Clarke, when the Convocation fell upon him." Note by Mrs. Clayton.

† It is to be regretted that the cipher in these letters is lost, and it could only be supplied by conjectures, which as often mislead as enlighten.

very surprising. You will find in the fourth line of your paper two vacancies by death. I propose, if you please, that the upper and lower Houses of Convocation may supply those vacancies.

I go from this place the 13th of this month. If you have any commands for me by Tuesday's post, direct hither; after that, to the place from whence I came. Adieu, my good friend.

72 and his wife are very faithful servants to 70 and 71.

The celebrated divine, Dr. Samuel Clarke, alluded to in this letter, not only enjoyed Mrs. Clayton's peculiar patronage, but was highly esteemed both by Queen Anne and Queen Caroline. He was at this time rector of St. James's. He was born at Norwich, in the year 1695. So great was his early proficiency in science, that, before the age of twenty-one, he contributed to the establishment of the Newtonian Philosophy, at Cambridge, by the translation of Rohault's Physics. At his first entrance into the University, the system of Descartes, considered by Bishop Hoadley as no more than the invention of an ingenious and luxuriant fancy, was the established philosophy in that seat of learning. Newton had, it is true, published his Principia, but prejudice was strong against it: and the book was for the few, not for the many.

Being destined to the church, Clarke then turned his attention to divinity. His works, like those of Bishop Hoadley, are voluminous. His Essays on Baptism, Confirmation, and Repentance—his Paraphrase of the Four Gospels, quickly attained popularity in an age when divinity was a fashionable study, and when parties in theology ran high. His Lecture on the Being and Attributes of God was, probably, the work which tended the most rapidly to extend his reputation. In these discourses, which were preached on the foundation of the lectures established by Robert Boyle, Dr. Clarke attempted to prove that the being of a God may be demonstrated by arguments *à priori*, and encountered, for this endeavour, the pungent, yet *not* unjust satire of Pope in the Dunciad:

> Let others creep by timid steps and slow,
> On plain experience lay foundations low;
> By common sense, to common knowledge bred,
> And last, by nature's cause, through nature led;
> All-seeing in thy mists, we want no guide;
> Mother of arrogance, and source of pride!
> We nobly take the high Priori road,
> And reason downwards, till we doubt of God!

It was after the delivery of these lectures, and those on the "Evidence of Natural and Revealed Religion," that the mind of Dr. Clarke first wavered on the grand principles of our faith, as members of the Church of England.

There was, at this time, in England a body of divines, strong in intellect, fearless in temper, and mighty in learning, who ventured to speculate on those sacred themes which it cannot be safe to approach in the spirit of party, nor wise to agitate with the vehemence of disputation. Many as have been the shocks sustained by our national Church, it has never, we believe, been in greater danger from its own members than in the reign of George the Second. Bigotry, according to Dr. Hoadley's statements, lent her firebrand to the hidden flame. "In Scotland," he observes, "let a man depart an inch from the Confession of Faith, and rule of worship as established by the Assembly, and he will quickly find that, as cold a country as it is, it is too hot for him to live in. The Reformation boasts itself, there, to be evangelical, with alloy, and is guarded by a very sensible severity of discipline. To suppose, therefore, any point of doctrine to be erroneous, or so much as a subject for a new examination, in so unspotted a Church, is a token of malignity and infidelity, and the man who doth it must be content to escape out of their hands as well as he can."

In England, the same writer also observes, that not all the excellences in the world united in one man can save him from the effects of heresy, or even

of differing from the current notions of the world, "especially if those opinions be such as are allowed to be mysterious and inexplicable."*

Undismayed by this acknowledged state of public feeling, and, still more, undeterred by the great risk and responsibility of bringing schism among Christians, Dr. Clarke published his work, entitled "the Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity;" for it was about this time, as his friend and biographer, the celebrated Whiston, informs us, that he had been looking into the primitive history of the Christians, and suspected that the Athanasian doctrine of the Trinity was not the doctrine of the early ages.

Before the publication of his work, Dr. Clarke received a letter from Lord Godolphin, then in Queen Anne's Ministry, importing that, "since the affairs of the public were with difficulty kept in the hands of those who were all for liberty," it was an unseasonable time for publication. To this, Clarke paid no attention. In 1714, a complaint was made of his work to the lower House of Convocation; but the complaint was hushed, upon the members of the upper House of Convocation declaring that they were satisfied with Dr. Clarke's declaration, which is said to be a simple protest

* Dedication of Bishop Hoadley's Letter to Pope Clement XI.

of a belief in the eternity of Jesus Christ, and of the Father. The fact appears to be this: it was represented to Dr. Clarke that, by maintaining his Scripture doctrines of the Trinity, he would produce a schism in the Church; he therefore preferred a partial retractation, upon the principle, as his friend Whiston observed, of "save thyself and us." In his submission, he promised not to preach nor write more on those doctrines; and the upper House of Convocation was content to retain in the Church a man unsound in his faith, rather than to run the risk of controversy, whilst, by the lax standard of right feeling in those times, he was judged to have acted a discreet part in sacrificing his private opinions to the good of the Church.

Dr. Clarke continued to reside at the Rectory of St. James's; and the party of whom he was the voice grew in power, and influenced the highest personages of the realm. It is difficult to affix to this diligent body of men, comprising Hoadley, Clarke, Whiston, and others, the place they would have held in the present day; nor is the subject of their opinions lightly to be entered upon by the unlearned. The doctrines maintained by the late Dr. Rees, the venerable and excellent editor of the Cyclopædia, and by Dr. Lindsey, his coad-

jutor, in his ministry, seem to have approached those of the Clarke and Hoadley school.

Queen Caroline, and her confidante, Mrs. Clayton, were deeply infected with the then fashionable opinions of Hoadley, and of Clarke, who was the personal friend of Mrs. Clayton. Like most of the founders of any particular sect or party in theology, the lives both of Clarke and of Whiston were distinguished for their purity, which, in the case of the former, was mingled with some worldly predilections. He was a perpetual visitant at Court, where the natural gaiety of his disposition, his varied acquirements, and the great ease of his manners, and, it may be added, of his conscience, (in retaining Church preferment under his circumstances,) procured him the esteem of Queen Caroline. Yet this able man could display a stern sense of duty, the exactness of which might be questioned.

When Sir John Germaine* was on his deathbed, and in great distress of mind, he sent for Dr. Clarke, and requested to know if he might receive the sacrament, and what he was to do in his sad condition. The Doctor, who was well acquainted

* Sir John Germaine, of Drayton, in Northamptonshire, from whom the surname of Germaine was adopted into the Sackville family.

with Sir John Germaine's course of life, calmly replied that he could not recommend him to receive the sacrament, and that it could not be of any avail to him in regard to his final welfare. He then left him, without administering the holy communion, having first recommended the soul of the unhappy man to God.* How different does this conduct appear to that pursued by Bishop Burnet to the Earl of Rochester, whose evil and shameless career Germaine could scarcely have exceeded.

By his own party, the prudence, or rather duplicity, of Clarke—whom we condemn not for matters of opinion, but for inconsistency of conduct—was highly applauded. "We have now an instance," wrote Bishop Hoadley, "of one or two learned, or otherwise good men, who have thought it their duty, as they themselves say, to step out of the common paths. What their fate will be time will show; at present, the zeal, as it is called, of their adversaries, prevails. The fire is kindled, and how far it will consume, or where it will stop, God only knows." He then draws an able character of Whiston, and refers to Clarke, as a man of unspotted integrity, of "unequalled learning,

* Biographia Britannica, edited by Kippis.

and of judgment."* We have good authority for stating, that Hoadley "declared to the world that he wished to be distinguished after death by no other title than 'the friend of Dr. Clarke.'"†

The following letter, selected from Lady Sundon's correspondence, shows Dr. Clarke in his character of a skilful courtier, a new light to many of our readers:—

DR. S. CLARKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Windsor, October 15, 1728.

MADAM,

I had the honour to present your humble duty to the Queen, and to express, in the best manner I could, your concern in inquiring after her health. She has had pretty sharp pain for two or three days, but only in one foot, with less heat and inflammation than last year. It began the very same day this year as the last; and she hopes it is now, in a manner, over. Her stomach is not yet returned; but, in all other respects, she thinks herself the better for this fit. My talent does not lie in polite expressions; and I am apprehensive, whenever I attempted it, I should succeed much in the same manner as Tully did in poetry. But I am very sure no one has a

* Dedication to Clement XI.

† Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century. By John Nichols. Vol. ix. p. 437.

more grateful, or more lasting sense of obligations, than,

Madam, your most obliged
and most obedient servant,
S. Clarke.

Another of Mrs. Clayton's correspondents was Wake, Archbishop of Canterbury, one of those prelates who appear to have realized the good old fashioned notion of a Bishop, in liberality, hospitality, and in a zeal to defend the Church. He ever displayed a kindly spirit, fitted to attract the love of Christians, and learning which adorned his eminent and revered station.

FROM WAKE, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, TO MRS. CLAYTON.

April 14, 1718.

Good Madam,

I cannot forbear returning my most hearty thanks to you for your great favour to poor Mr. Echard, of which he expresses the deepest sense to me. I thought I had sufficiently prepared the Princess to have given him some reward for his present, he being both poor enough to need it, and humble enough to accept it. I still hope her Royal Highness and the Prince design him somewhat, for the books cost him above 12*l.* out of his pocket, and we little folk (I can speak it for my

Lord Chancellor* and myself, and, I believe, may do it for more) presented him with twenty guineas a-piece for his two last volumes, plain bound. If you know anything is designed him, I beg an account of it; for I shall, God willing, wait upon the Princess to-morrow, and will put her in mind of this charity, if her present trouble has made her forget it; otherwise I should be sorry to speak of it.

I am sure you will have the goodness to excuse this trouble, and the confidence which, encouraged by many instances of your favour, I repose in you; and believe me to be, with a very sincere respect,

Madam, your most faithful obliged humble servant,

W. Cant.

The Mr. Echard referred to in this letter, can scarcely be Laurence Echard, the author of the History of England, since he was at that time Archdeacon of Stowe, and possessed many other preferments; yet, since Echard dedicated the first part of his History to George the First, it appears likely that he would become the subject of royal favour.

Archbishop Wake, although descended from an

* William Lord Cowper, afterwards Earl Cowper, Lord Chancellor in 1714.

ancient Saxon family, had been destined by his father to the business of a clothier. He resisted that scheme, and was preferred to be chaplain to Viscount Preston, who was sent by Charles the Second, Envoy Extraordinary to France.

Here Wake formed an intimate acquaintance with the most eminent French divines. Nevertheless, he became the opponent of the famous Bossuet, and devoted his evenings to the exposition of the fallacies of the Romish Church. He was one of the prelates who concurred in the sentence against Sacheverell. When raised to the Primacy, he endeavoured, however, to guard the Church of England, not only against Popery, but against that lowering and busy party who sought to level the Church, and to lessen its sanctity in the eyes of the people.

Between Archbishop Wake, and Bishop Hoadley, no very cordial good will existed. Hoadley was the chief promoter of the design of repealing the Test and Corporation Acts; Wake openly opposed that scheme. "Some of our Bishops," he wrote, "are labouring to pull down the Church in which they minister, and to introduce such licentiousness as would overthrow the grace of the Holy Spirit, the divinity of Christ, and all other fundamental articles of our religion." He laments that

"the wolves were not only received into the sheepfold, but within the walls of the Church, and there preferred to honours and dignities." Such was the language of one who held a middle course between the violence and bigotry of Sacheverell, and the laxity of Hoadley.

In 1721, Wake joined the Earl of Nottingham in an unwise and unchristian attempt to introduce a bill against Arians; by Whiston this was termed an endeavour to introduce an Holy Inquisition into the Church of England; furious were the divisions which at that time prevailed, and almost rent in twain the contending parties of the Church. Mrs. Clayton and her royal patroness continued, however, to favour the Low Church section, and became still more deeply imbued with its opinions.

It appears now almost like relating a dream, to revive in the remembrance of the present generation, an attempt promoted by Archbishop Wake to unite the two Churches of England and of France. Such a scheme was, however, long contemplated both by the English Metropolitan, and the famous Louis Dupin, Doctor of the Sorbonne at Paris, between whom and Wake a correspondence was effected through the medium of Lord Stair, then ambassador at Paris. The paper in which

the chief heads of this union were stated, was drawn up, and even submitted to the Cardinal de Noailles for his approval. In it were ceded the administration of the Eucharist in both kinds to the laity; the performing of the service in the vulgar tongue; the marriage of the clergy; whilst the invocation of saints was given up as unnecessary. The Regent, Duke of Orleans, was favourable to this scheme, which, unhappily, was frustrated by the treachery and inconsistency of the Abbé du Bois, then Minister for Foreign Affairs; but a deep sense of Archbishop Wake's probity and learning, and a conviction of his benevolence even to foreign Churches, was established in the minds of those who had promoted the negotiation.

The celebrated Père Courayer long corresponded with him on various subjects connected with the affairs of the Church.

"I wish, my good father," writes the Archbishop,* in answer to one of Courayer's letters, "I were more worthy of your good opinion than I fear I am. Report magnifies men's characters at a distance; but few answer the expectations which from thence are raised of them. I bless God I know my own mediocrity, and am not exalted in any opinion of myself. God has given me an

* This letter is taken from the Biograph. Britann. (Wake.)

honest mind, desirous to act with integrity in everything: and having long conversed with men of all persuasions, and found some to value in almost every way, I have learnt not only to bear with those who differ from me, but, notwithstanding any such differences, to love them; to think charitably of them, and to hope that a God of infinite love and goodness, will pity and accept of us all. If in this I am mistaken, I am sure I err on the best side; and as these thoughts shall never make me either negligent in the search of what is agreeable to God's will, or prejudiced against it, though never so contrary to my present notion, so I am persuaded that by keeping up such an universal charity in my mind for those who in the integrity of their hearts differ from me, I shall always be the best prepared to submit to a reasonable conviction, and to obtain God's pardon for any involuntary errors I may, after all, happen to continue in.

"Cassander, Erasmus, Grotius, and the like writers are, I freely own, my great favourites; but as I deserve not to be compared with them in anything but the like Christian and charitable dispositions, so neither would I be thought so vain as once to think myself in learning or capacity like them. My picture was some time ago finished at the desire of some persons; the plate is entirely worn out, and the copies of it no longer to be had. I sent my last by our friend to you, and have not one more for myself or any other remaining.

W. CANT."

How beautiful is the conclusion of one of the Archbishop's letters to Courayer, who was eventually obliged to take refuge in England, from the persecutions of his brother ecclesiastics.

"We hope," he writes, "notwithstanding our difficulties, to be united in the glorious fellowship of the Church triumphant. Why may we not be as well united in the Church militant? A Catholic love and spirit may well consist with a variety of judgment in respect to the doctrines of Christ. In all essentials we are agreed. I am sure, had we lived at any time within the first five centuries, the subscription of the Nicene and Constantinopolitan creeds, would have instituted us into the common name and right of Catholic Christians; were it not for the love of dominion in the Court of Rome, the case would be the same now. However, I will never reckon him estranged from the Church of Christ here, whom I hope and am persuaded he will receive hereafter. My principles are Catholic; my heart is the same; and my love and prayers shall be so too."

In sentiments equally Christian, and therefore equally wise and enlightened, the Archbishop thus paints, in a letter to Courayer, the then existing state of the Church of England. Taken in conjunction with the preceding accounts of Hoadley, and of Clarke, the following letter completes that

summary view of the condition of religious affairs in this country, during the life of Queen Caroline, which I have endeavoured to offer, and forms a curious subject for reflection and comparison.

"Lambeth House, Dec. 7, 1726.

"Your observation" (observes his Grace),* "of our country with respect to religion, is but too true. Our divisions are many, and the liberty taken by men in treating of matters of faith and doctrine, is much beyond what either our laws permit, or it were to be wished our Government should suffer. The several Acts of Parliament that have been made to restrain blasphemy, profaneness, and heresy (to say nothing of our Ecclesiastical Canons), are as strict as one could desire; but for that very reason are the less executed, because their penalties are esteemed too severe. How to remedy this I cannot tell; all that I can say is, that no care is wanting among our Clergy to defend the Christian faith against all assaults, and that I believe no age or nation has produced more or better writings against Atheists, Deists, Socinians, Arians, and all other the like libertines, than our country has done, and continues daily to do. And for such as separate from the Established Church, I may boldly say nothing of argument has been offered by them to justify their separation, that has not been often and fully answered by us. This is all we *can* do. Iniquity

* Biographia Britannica, (Wake.)

in practice, God knows, abounds too much among us, chiefly in the two extremes, the highest and lowest ranks of men. The middle sort are serious and religious, and I hope there is among us so large a remnant as will still secure the mercy and favour of God to us, till by His grace something can be done more effectually to reclaim the rest. This is the true state of the case; I doubt yours is not much better; you have divisions not much lesser or fewer than ours. If the morals of your people are better, I congratulate heartily your happiness in it.

"For myself, I live almost a monastic life. I have a large and numerous family, and I keep it under the best regulation I can. We have the service of God within ourselves, and that in public in my chapel and house, four times a day. We live orderly and peaceably together; and though the necessity of business draws a great number of persons to me, yet I reduce even that as much as possible to certain times; and then eat openly with my friends two days in the week. To the Court I seldom go, save when obliged to attend my duty, either in the public or cabinet councils; and when in Parliament-time I am rather faulty, in not going so often as I should to it, than in attending constantly upon it; so that I use my best endeavours to live clear of the world, and die by degrees to it. My age and infirmities (being now ready to enter on my seventieth year) admonish me to look upon myself as a citizen of another

and better country, and ready to go from hence to it. Your prayers for a happy passage to it, will be a seasonable and friendly help, added to my own. In return, I shall not be wanting to wish you all happiness in your longer pilgrimage upon earth. And though we go by somewhat different paths, yet as we do in effect pursue the same road, so I trust we shall meet together at our journey's end. In the mean time, I heartily commit you to the protection and blessing of our Heavenly Father, and with the most sincere love and esteem, remain,

My good Father,

Your faithful friend and Servant in Christ,

W. CANT."

This excellent man lived to an advanced age, and died in 1736-7, at Lambeth Palace, on which he had expended a far larger sum in repairs than any that had been bestowed on that structure since the Reformation.

CHAPTER V.

Intrigues at Court—Character of George the First—Mrs. Howard—Her marriage—She proceeds to Hanover—Is appointed Bedchamber-woman to the Princess of Wales—Her apartment resorted to by the wits—Lord Chesterfield—Court ladies and gentlemen—Mary Bellenden attracts the gallantry of the Prince of Wales—She repulses him—Mrs. Howard proves more indulgent—Her husband claims her—Abandons her for a pension—Mrs. Howard's uncomfortable life at Court—Her letter to Swift—Mrs. Clayton gets her niece appointed Maid of Honour—Description of the Maids of Honour by Mary Lepel—Countess of Pomfret—The Pomfret letters—Pomfret pedigree—Lady Sophia Fermor—Her marriage with Lord Carteret—Her death—Her sisters—Lady Pomfret's intimacy with Mrs. Clayton—A complimentary letter—Economy at Court—Lady Pomfret's difficulties and distresses—Lady Carteret and her lover the Archbishop of Dublin—Colonel Duncombe's debts.

CHAPTER V.

ALTHOUGH the divines of the day form a considerable feature in the annals of Queen Caroline's Court, the time and interests of the Queen and her influential servant were often occupied with themes far less worthy than the affairs of the Church. It is difficult to conceive any royal personage wholly free from the vice of intrigue; in the petty German courts whence our Queens consort have been selected, intrigue was taught almost as a science; and the amiable and strong mind of Caroline was not able to resist the influence of early precept, and the force of circumstances. No easy task must it have been for her to bend her superior intellect to the guidance of her heavy royal husband; and in the acquisition of that influence, for which she sacrificed so much of the dignity and delicacy of her character, she lowered a reputation for virtue and sagacity, which otherwise would have been for ever pre-eminent.

The reign of George the Second, it has been

observed, "has produced as great statesmen, orators, and heroes, as dignify the annals of any country." To this climax the personal character of the King in no way contributed. At his accession, he bore, indeed, the character of a man of high integrity and veracity, and his virtues as a private individual shone in a somewhat fairer light than those of his predecessor. For his unfortunate mother, Sophia Dorothea, he had entertained an affection which elevated his character; her death alone prevented his bringing her to England, and styling her the Queen Dowager. Inferior to his father in understanding, he yet evinced a somewhat more parental interest in the welfare of his British dominions, than George the First had ever displayed. His two predominant passions were, nevertheless, "Hanover and money;" and his forbearance to those who had offended him in his English servants, resulted rather from apathy than from mercy. He was, if not wholly destitute of sagacity, devoid both of feeling and imagination: unendowed with any pretensions to learning, he despised literature and her votaries, and would, according to Walpole, "have preferred a guinea to a composition as perfect as Alexander's Feast." His passions, if such they could be called, which scarcely agitated

his sluggish methodical mind, were like those of his father, avowedly gross and degrading. His principles were of that German school which establishes vice, unblushingly, by the side of virtue on the throne of domestic life.

In person, George the Second was singularly insignificant, and even vulgar. His eyes were light and weak, his features of an ordinary stamp, and his countenance heavy. His temper was phlegmatic, and therefore sometimes endowed him with the semblance of fortitude. His greatest merit, according to Walpole, consisted in bearing either good or ill-fortune with calmness. Such was the consort to whom Caroline, in her bloom of youth, was consigned, and to whom she managed to pay such tributes of duty as almost deceived those who beheld them into the belief of her affection for the King.

The Monarch was soon swayed, both by her superior intellect, and by her practised address. Tenacious of his conjugal authority as Henry the Eighth, George experienced from his wife that profound deference which nothing but *system* could have maintained. In his presence, she counterfeited the greatest humility, submitting her opinion to that of the King, whose apathy was never so strongly awakened as at the suppo-

sition that he was governed by his wife; yet Caroline acquired an ascendancy over her husband of a very singular and almost inexplicable description.

Constancy in royalty, to the conjugal tie, was not etiquette in those times, and feelings were luxuries not to be indulged in courts. It was necessary for George the Second to have a female favourite; his love of money, and his dependence upon the Queen for happiness, might easily have been called into aid, to induce him to dispense with this court appendage; but custom negatived this innovation in courts, and a mistress was established at St. James's, in Mrs. Howard, afterwards Countess of Suffolk.

Henrietta Hobart, the eldest daughter of Sir John Hobart, Bart., and sister of Sir John Hobart, who was created Earl of Buckinghamshire, was the chosen object, not only of the King's but of the Queen's preference. She was a woman of ordinary abilities and of moderate beauty; her face, remarks Horace Walpole, who was intimately acquainted with her in later years, and who gleaned from her many of his anecdotes, "was regular and agreeable, rather than beautiful; a profusion of fine light-brown hair adorned a countenance of equivocal charms." But a remark-

able decorum and elegance of manner, the art of dressing well, and great discretion, without reserve, rendered her a valuable member of a court. To these characteristics she added some higher qualities; her veracity was acknowledged, and the propriety and decency of her conduct established for her the footing of propriety. She was always considered as if her virtue had never been questioned. She was disinterested, kind-hearted, mild, and grave—these pleasing traits have sometimes raised a doubt, whether a woman, endowed with so many excellences, could descend to be the mistress of the King. But, whilst the friends of Lady Suffolk claimed for her the benefit of doubt, the well-known grossness of George the Second dispels all hopes of her purity; nor has a woman, who lends herself to such a course as that which Lady Suffolk pursued, and who calmly surrenders her character to the censure of the world, defying all decorum, any right to expect the honours due to propriety. She condemns herself.

Lady Suffolk had known, in her early life, vicissitudes of fortune, which tempted her to profit by the opportunities of aggrandizement offered to her in later years. With only the slender fortune, as Horace Walpole entitles it,

"of a Baronet's daughter," she first married Mr. Howard, son of the Earl of Suffolk, whose means were scarcely more considerable than her own. Towards the close of Queen Anne's reign, the young couple saw no better prospect of advancement than to repair to the court of Hanover, there to ingratiate themselves with the future sovereigns of England. So small was their income, that Mr. Howard, being desirous of giving the Hanoverian ministers a dinner, his wife was obliged to cut off her luxuriant hair to pay for the expense of the entertainment. This happened at a time when full-bottomed wigs were worn, and when twenty or thirty guineas were often paid for those articles.

The Princess Sophia, mother of George the First, distinguished Mrs. Howard with her favour; but the attractions of the young Englishwoman had no effect upon the dull perceptions of George the Second until his father's accession, when Mrs. Howard was appointed one of the Bedchamber-women to Caroline, then Princess of Wales.

The Whig party being in vogue, such of the younger nobility as belonged to it naturally formed the Court of Caroline; and the apartment of the Bedchamber-woman in waiting became the place of assembly for all the wits and beauties of

that faction. Lord Chesterfield, then only nineteen years of age, in the full vigour of his misdirected talents, and in all the bloom of his manly beauty, was one of that dissipated circle. On being appointed, in 1715, one of the Prince of Wales's Gentlemen of the Bedchamber, he quickly formed a lasting intimacy, something between gallantry and friendship, with Mrs. Howard. The summer preceding 1714 had been passed by this fascinating nobleman at the Hague, where his scholastic habits had been, to use his own expression, laughed out of him, and where he gained, as he had entered into the coarse dissipation of Cambridge, "to be in the fashion." Carr, Lord Hervey—reputed to be a man of greater abilities than his more celebrated brother John—and Charles Churchill, brother of the Duke of Marlborough, completed the lively group of young courtiers, with the addition of the amiable and melancholy Lord Scarborough, who was, even at an earlier period of his life, subject to fits of depression, in one of which he ultimately terminated his existence by his own hand.

But in the chamber of Mrs. Howard all was gaiety and thoughtless flirtation at that period. Whilst the Princess Caroline and Mrs. Clayton were discussing theological tenets with a freedom

which drew upon them from Swift the odium of being "free-thinkers," Mrs. Howard was perfecting her manners and character to become the complete courtier; and, as Swift perhaps too truly remarked, was succeeding so well in that career, that "her private virtues, for want of room to operate, might be folded up, and laid up clean, like clothes in a chest, never to be put on till satiety, or some reverse of fortune, should dispose her to retirement. In the meantime, it will be her prudence to take care that they be not tarnished and moth-eaten, for want of opening, and airing, and turning, at least once a year."

Lady Walpole, the mother of Horace Walpole, Mrs. Selwyn, the mother of George Selwyn, and a young lady of great vivacity and beauty, the fair Mary Lepell, and the still fairer Miss Bellenden, both Maids of Honour, completed this choice coterie. Let it not be supposed, however, that their conversation was, at all times, very refined, or their diversions perfectly in unison with female propriety.*

The language of these Court ladies was about as choice as their amusements. "I'll be hanged for it," is an expression not rarely to be met with in the correspondence of Mrs. Howard; "She is

* See Lady Suffolk's Letters, p. 361, vol. i. Note.

a limber, dirty fool," writes another grand lady, speaking of the Countess of Warrington—adding, "the roads are *cursed* in Cheshire." Even the letters penned by the beautiful Mary, or, as she was familiarly called, Molly Bellenden, are by no means free from vulgarism and indelicacy.

This fair and irreproachable young lady divided the Court with Mrs. Howard. Her face and person, according to Horace Walpole, were charming; "lively was she almost to *etourderie*, yet so agreeable, that she was mentioned by her contemporaries as the most perfect creature they ever knew." As she delighted the danglers in the waiting-room with her sallies, yet kept the most audacious of them at a distance by the real innocence of her heart, the charms of Miss Bellenden attracted the coarse admiration of the Prince of Wales. George had never, until that time, been devoted to any woman, except his Princess: henceforth his love was divided between Miss Bellenden and his money. The high-spirited girl, disgusted at his preferences and hating his avarice, cried out one night as he was counting out his money beside her, "Sir, if you do so again, I will go out of the room."

Her heart was shielded, not only by principle and modesty, so rare in those times, but by a true

affection. She loved, in secret, a young Groom of the Bedchamber, Colonel John Campbell, long afterwards Duke of Argyle. The Prince, finding that his addresses were repelled, suspected her attachment. He behaved with an unlooked-for generosity, and promised her, if she married with his knowledge, to be kind to her husband. But Mary Bellenden dared not trust to this assurance. She married in private, and George never forgave her, whispering sometimes, when subsequently she went to the drawing-rooms, the harshest reproaches in her ear. "Mrs. Howard," relates Horace Walpole, "was the intimate friend of Miss Bellenden; had been the confidante of the Prince's passion;" and, as Madame de Maintenon succeeded to the envied post of Madame de Montespan, she succeeded to that of her friend, and the impropriety of her conduct soon became notorious.

Mr. Howard, although worthless and indifferent, was the first to make the scandal public, by going into the quadrangle of St. James's, and demanding his wife. Being driven out, he sent her a letter, through the Archbishop of Canterbury, reclaiming her, and that epistle was delivered into the hands of Mrs. Howard by the Queen. Nevertheless, upon the Court removing to Richmond, the car-

riage of the favourite was guarded by no less a person than John Duke of Argyle, accompanied by his brother, Lord Islay; and the Queen, whatever were her secret sentiments, countenanced her, whilst her husband was silenced with a pension. Henceforth, Mrs. Howard led a life of bondage, little solaced by real influence, or by what she appeared to disregard—wealth. The Queen ever retained the paramount influence over that portion of his Majesty's heart which was called, by a stretch of courtesy, his affections. He unceasingly admired her stately figure, and preferred her calm, well-proportioned face to the lowlier beauty of Mrs. Howard, whose existence became a state of slavery, without the plea of duty, or the charm of interest. She soon loathed her bonds, but was not permitted to shake them off, lest a younger favourite should gain a greater ascendancy over the King. Deafness, added to advancing age—was in vain urged, as a reason on both sides, for separation. "I do not know," said King George, mournfully, to the Queen, "why you will not let me part with a deaf old woman, of whom I am weary." It was a strange sight to behold the complacent Bedchamber-woman dressing the hair of her royal mistress,

who delighted in subjecting her to such offices, gilding over the indignity with apologies to her "good Howard." The succession of her husband to his title of Earl of Suffolk, ended, however, that part of her well-merited chastisement.

Such was the state of the interior of the Court, whilst, to the public, Caroline appeared but as the dispenser of good; the theologian, the patroness of letters, the pure high-minded woman of undoubted virtue and delicacy. It is probable that she submitted only to that which was inevitable; but the disgrace of retaining about her the mistress of her husband need not have been incurred. A feebler nature—a far less powerful individual—the despised Katherine of Braganza, had rebelled against a similar wrong. She rebelled in vain; yet posterity pities her after compliance, and acquits her of unwomanly and unqueenly conduct. Caroline is related to have made no such struggle, but to have succumbed, from a mean policy, to a condition degrading, in the extreme, to virtue.

The influence of Mrs. Clayton grew in this disturbed atmosphere; imitating the Queen, she affected an interest in literary men, and left the pleasures of the Court to the young and beautiful. But her views were far, it is affirmed, from being

disinterested, and personal aggrandizement was to be the price of her long hired services.

The following letter, addressed by Mrs. Howard to Swift, in 1727, shows so much of her disposition, as to betray, though under the garb of humour, such an insight into her inmost feelings, that it is here given in illustration of her character:*—

MRS. HOWARD TO DEAN SWIFT.

September, 1727.

I write to you to please myself. I hear you are melancholy because you have a bad head and deaf ears. These are two misfortunes I have laboured under these many years, and yet never was peevish either with myself or the world. Have I more philosophy and resolution than you? Or am I so stupid that I do not feel the evil? Is this meant in a good-natured view? Or do I mean that I please myself when I insult over you? Answer these queries in writing, if *poison* or other methods do not enable you soon to appear in person. Though I make use of your own word poison, give me leave to tell you it is nonsense; and I desire you will take more care for the time to come. Now you endeavour to impose upon my understanding by making no use of your own.

* Swift's Works, vol. xviii. p. 224.

By her interest with the Queen, Mrs. Clayton had afterwards the satisfaction of seeing her niece, Miss Dyves, promoted to be one of the Maids of Honour; and her satisfaction must have been enhanced by the necessity of the case, the rest of her family appearing to have been in the greatest necessity, and almost wholly dependent on Mrs. Clayton for support.

The following from Mrs. Clayton's niece, after having been appointed an attendant on one of the Princesses, describing her first interview with her royal mistress, will not be read without interest:—

MISS DOROTHY DYVES TO MRS. CLAYTON.

August 14.

I am quite at a loss how to thank my dearest aunt for all your great goodness and concern for me when I was ill, and which, upon all occasions, I have had the vast happiness of always finding the same; and which I am sure nothing can equal but the duty and love I shall ever have for my dear aunt. I am sensible that it is my advantage, as well as inclination, to follow your advice; and am so thoroughly convinced of its being always right, that I have equally a pride and pleasure in being commended by you. I went last Sunday to the Lodge, by half an hour after twelve o'clock.

Mrs. Neale was in waiting, who carried in the message you bade me send. The Princess sent for me in immediately; and though I was in a prodigious fright when I went in, the Princess was so mighty good to me that it lessened it very much. I was with her, I believe, an hour, and said everything you bade me, which her Royal Highness seemed to take mighty well of you, and said you were very good to her, and commended both you and Uncle Clayton extremely. Her Royal Highness spoke of you with regard to me in a manner that I own was an inexpressible pleasure to me to hear. The Princess spoke a great deal about my behaviour, and said she should be in the wrong if she did not like mine. This I could not omit saying, as being very sensible that whatever I do right is entirely owing to your goodness. I do not mention anything of Monsieur Montendre, because he sent a letter himself, which, I suppose, said what he had done.

I am, dear Madam,

Your most dutiful niece and
humble servant,
D. Dyves.

I beg my duty to my uncle.

A glimpse at Court Life is here afforded, from the same pen. The young lady was probably enjoined to allow no trifle to escape her observation.

MISS DOROTHY DYVES TO MRS. CLAYTON.

October 9.

I shall be exceeding glad to hear my dearest aunt got safe to Sundon, and that you are well. The Princess wears the same old leather fan she used to wear, so I said nothing about it, as you bade me. Lady Pomfret does, I think, mighty well, and wants little or no instructions. The first night, when the Prince went to play, the Princess sent one of the pages to tell her to go down to him. The Prince sent up himself immediately after, to ask her to come down. She goes into the room every night, but does not play, for there is company enough not to be wanted; and she does not choose it, because she cannot play well. I believe everybody is mighty well satisfied with her, for I have not heard the least complaint of any sort. I believe she intends to write to you soon. Miss Mordaunt desired me to make her compliments to you, and that her thoughts are so full of the kind invitation you gave her of coming into Bedfordshire, that she dreams of it. I am sure the happiness my dear aunt promised me in being with you next summer, is my most agreeable waking thoughts, and gives me more pleasure than I can express, and as much as I can feel when I am not with you. We hear that Lord Chesterfield is either dead or dying, and that Lord Stanhope was sent for from the Bath, which is all the news I hear. The day

is not yet fixed for leaving Richmond. I beg you will give my duty to my uncle, who, I hope, is very well, and believe me to be,

Dear Madam,

Your most dutiful niece and humble servant,

D. Dyves.

Charlotte Dyves was another of Mrs. Clayton's nieces, for whom she obtained employment about the Court. Some years afterwards, Walpole mentions her as likely to be appointed one of the Bedchamber women to the young Queen of George the Third, on her arrival in England. The Mr. Nash she describes was the celebrated Beau Nash: she laid the wager, and won it.

MISS CHARLOTTE DYVES TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Tunbridge, July 26.

Dear Madam,

The great pleasure your kind letter gave me is not to be expressed; and knowing how much you dislike writing, makes me extremely proud of the honour you have done me, and shall always with great pride own the great and many obligations I have had the happiness and pleasure of receiving from the best of aunts. I hope Sundon air agrees with you as it used to do. I have a great many compliments to you from Lady Lynne, who wishes much she could ever be so happy as

to be with you at Sundon. I wish it was in my power to acknowledge in the manner I ought, the grateful sense I have of the kind and obliging way you bid me take care of my health, and that you would take care of me, if I wanted money or anything else; and I think myself vastly happy in not wanting to be troublesome, for all my affairs will hold out very well. Lady Lynne is as civil as ever,—quite in an obliging way. We dined about a week ago with Sir John Stanley; the company that was there, was Mr. and Mrs. Floyd, Mrs. Skerret, Dr. Peters, and Mr. Nash. I do not know how it came in after dinner, but Nash said he remembered visiting you, in the Queen's reign, in Clarges or Bolton Street, he was not sure which. I said I fancied he was mistaken. Upon that he said, if I would give him a shilling, he would give me a guinea if you said you never had lived in either of those streets after you was married. And now, having no news to tell, will conclude, and beg,

Dearest Madam,

You will believe me your most dutiful and obedient niece,

C. Dyves.

I hope my uncle is well, and beg my most humble duty to him.

A lively character was afterwards drawn by the clever pen of Lady Hervey (Mary Lepel) of "the Six Maids of Honour," of whom Miss Dyves was

one. She describes them as six volumes, originally bound in CALF, which contained many things that would entertain or instruct many. The first volume, Miss Meadows, is represented as a mingled satire, and reflection; the second, a plain treatise on morality; the next was a rhapsody, very verbose, and nothing in it; the fourth volume, supposed to be Miss Fitzwilliam, afterwards Lady Pembroke, "was neatly bound, and the title of it the Lady's Guide; or, the Whole Art of Dress—a book worth perusing." The next, a miscellaneous work, in a pocket edition, in which are some essays on love and gallantry; a discourse on lying; tea-table chit-chat; the whole very prolix and unentertaining. The sixth volume, Miss Vane, a folio, being a collection of all the Court ballads; a key to them, and all the jokes and witticisms of the fashionable world, easily read by those of the meanest understanding, as it was written in the vulgar tongue.*

Whilst the Court circle displayed all these heterogeneous qualities, there were, even in its most exclusive haunts, certain ladies of a different stamp, women of a high tone of morals, of considerable acquirement, and of still more considerable pretensions. Such, for instance, was the

* Lady Suffolk's Letters, p. 10.

well-known Henrietta Louisa, Countess of Pomfret, the authoress of the correspondence with Lady Hertford, and the subject of frequent satire, and even of much ill-nature, from the pen of Horace Walpole.

Lady Pomfret was Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Caroline, as well as her friend, Lady Hertford—and it was not until the death of the Queen that they retired from public life, and commenced their *too*-celebrated correspondence; for, deficient in depth of thought, the Pomfret letters are far inferior to their reputation, the extent of which now greatly excites our surprise. In this country, however, lettered aristocracy is repaid by the public, even for the lightest exertions of intellect, tenfold.

Lady Pomfret owed her birth to the son of Lord Jeffries—that boasting young nobleman, who is said to have arrested the progress of Dryden's funeral, under a promise of doing greater honour to the mighty dead — to have intruded upon the grief of his fainting wife, the Lady Elizabeth Dryden, and to have wrung from her a consent to his undertaking, and then to have forgotten altogether this grand project, worthy of his vain and vulgar mind. There is, generally, a certain sort of regret in recalling the

memory of an extinct title—of a great family passed away—but there is satisfaction in the thought, that the name of Jeffries is ennobled no more. In Lady Pomfret the last of her line ceased; her father closed a career of dissipation in 1703, leaving her his sole heiress.

Lady Pomfret, notwithstanding the stain of being descended from Judge Jeffries, was proud of her family honours. Her mother was the daughter of Philip Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, and upon this ground she plumed herself. "She and my Lord," writes Horace Walpole, "both descend from Edward the First by his two Queens. The pedigree is painted in a book; instead of a vulgar genealogical tree, she has devised a pine apple plant, sprouting out of a basket, on which is King Edward's head; on the leaves are all the intermediate arms; the fruit is sliced open, and discovers the busts of the Earl and Countess, from whence issue their issue!" And a goodly race it was, if we except the Earl of Lempster, the Countess's eldest son.

Six lovely daughters, the three elder of whom were celebrated Court beauties, established the Countess in the highest walks of fashion. The Lady Sophia Fermor, often styled by Horace Walpole, Juno, must indeed have been one of

those models of form and face which one sometimes beholds among the *young* English aristocracy: for their beauty declines very early in life. From her picture at Strawberry Hill, she appears to have had an almost childish countenance, as far as its youthful fresh aspect was concerned; but the large dark eyes are at once soft and intelligent. If we may believe Horace Walpole, the sweetness of that matchless countenance was not always undisturbed. "Then there was," he says, speaking of Sir Thomas Robinson's ball, "Lady Sophia, handsomer than ever, but a little out of humour at the scarcity of minuets; however, as usual, she danced more than anybody, and, as usual too, took out what men she liked, or thought the best dancers. *Mem.*—Lord Holderness is a little, what Lord Lincoln will be to-morrow."

Related to the heroine of the Rape of the Lock, Lady Sophia seems to have realized the description of the poet:—

> Some nymphs there are, too conscious of their face,
> For life predestined to the gnomes' embrace.
> These swell their prospects, and exalt their pride,
> When offers are disdained, and love denied;
> Then gay ideas crowd the vacant brain,
> Where peers, and dukes, and all their sweeping train,
> And garters, stars, and coronets appear,
> And, in soft sounds, 'your grace' salutes their ear.

Rejecting, perhaps, by maternal command, the

enamoured and desponding Lord Lincoln, the handsomest man of his time, she married John Lord Carteret, and first Earl Granville, at that time secretary of state, and fifty-four years of age; but a man of great wit and eloquence, a scholar, and a fine gentleman. From henceforth Lady Carteret's short career was one of great brilliancy. "Do but imagine," observes Horace Walpole, "how many passions will be gratified in that family; her own ambition—vanity and resentment—love she never had any. The politics, management, and pedantry of the mother, who will think to govern her son-in-law out of Froissart," (which she had translated.) "Figure the instructions she will give her daughter. Lincoln is quite indifferent and laughs." *

This projected marriage was for some time the amusement of the whole Court, when suddenly, on the eve of its completion, the beautiful Sophia was taken ill of the scarlet fever, and Lord Carteret of the gout. He heroically sent her word "that if she were well, he would be so;"—he wearied the Privy Council by reading her letters to them; and betrayed all the follies of a lover out of season. To this singular farce succeeded all the grandeur which two ambitious people could

* H. Walpole's Letters, ed. by Lord Dover, vol. i. p. 359.

covet. The young bride became a grandmother instantly on her marriage—was escorted to public places by the white-wigged old gallants of her husband's court; and she, bedizened with knots, and small hoods, and white ribands. Lady Carteret lived in public places; whilst her brother, in lisping accents, remarked, "Indeed, I think my thister doeth countenants Ranelagh too mutch."

But ridicule could neither diminish the force of Lady Carteret's charms, nor the effects of her husband's unbounded popularity. After he was made an Earl, and had resigned, she became the leader of the opposition party, and her assemblies vexed the hearts of the Pelhams "more than a mysterious meeting of the States would do, or the abrupt breaking up of the Diet at Grodno." The beautiful Countess was "made for doing honours;" whilst at a gay resort at the Venetian ambassador's,—from which the Pelhams were excluded—she appeared "dressed like Imoinda, and handsomer than the houris." Meantime, her husband and her friends hailed with delight the probability of her becoming a mother; and the more especially, that Lord Granville's son and heir was a lunatic. A fever attacked this fair, fine creature, before her confinement; one evening, when her mother and Lady Charlotte Fermor sat beside

her, she sighed deeply, and said, "I feel death coming very fast upon me." This was the first intimation to the ambitious mother and affectionate sister, of immediate danger. She repeated the same words frequently, but with composure, and died in the course of the night. Thus was snatched away from a world which she loved too well, the pride of her family, and the envied ornament of the Court.

Her sister, Lady Charlotte, after refusing Lord Holderness, married the Right Honourable William Finch, brother to the late Earl of Winchelsea, and was mother of the Earl of Winchelsea and Nottingham. She was governess to the younger children of his late Majesty George the Third; and died, at St. James's, at an advanced age, and greatly respected. She is believed, by the descendants of the Pomfret family, to have been the object of Horace Walpole's preference; although his constant allusions to Lady Carteret, his evident pique at her lofty indifference, and his deep interest in all that befel her, seem to imply that his affections were directed to that quarter. Lady Juliana, the third daughter of Lady Pomfret, married Thomas Penn, then one of the proprietors of Pennsylvania. She appears,

from her portrait, to have been as lovely as the Countess of Granville.

The virtues and acquirements of Lady Pomfret were universally acknowledged; yet Horace Walpole paints her character in colours too natural for us to doubt, that her learning was often offensive, and her presumption impertinent; nevertheless, there is an evident determination in one who, perhaps, owed her some secret revenge, to ridicule her, whether she chose, in a fancy dress, to trudge into a gay masquerade, like a pilgrim, her lord and she with staffs in their hands, or whether, "on being told of the man that talked of nothing but Madeira, she asked, gravely, what language that was"—or whether, having purchased the Arundelian marbles of her son, Lord Lempster, who was ruined, and forced to dispose of his furniture at Easton Neston, she made a present of them to Oxford—she is equally the object of sarcasm and insinuations.

On her bestowal of her collection of statues on the University of Oxford, Lady Pomfret appeared there at the public Act to receive adoration. A box was built for her near the Vice-Chancellor, where she sat three days together, for four hours at a time, "to hear herself called Minerva; nay, the public orator had prepared an

encomium on her beauty, but being struck with her appearance, had enough presence of mind to whisk his compliments to the beauty of her mind." Such is Horace Walpole's account. The Countess figured in this grave assembly, according to the same malicious annalist, in all the "tawdry poverty and frippery imaginable, and in a scoured damask robe," and he wonders that she did not "wash out a few words of Latin," as she used to fricassee French and Italian, or that she did not torture some learned simile, like her comparing the tower of Sicily, the surrounding the triangle, to squaring the circle; or, as when she said "it was as difficult to get into an Italian coach, as for Cæsar to take Attica—by which she meant Utica." Such are the sneers against the erudite and saintly Lady Pomfret, whom we were taught, in the early part of the present century, to venerate as a model of wisdom—until the sparkling, irresistible satires of Walpole were disinterred from their sealed chest.

The source of Lady Pomfret's alliance with Mrs. Clayton, is said to have been interest. Mrs. Clayton's public virtue was of a delicate nature. Nothing made her so indignant as a charge of having accepted money as a bribe—but she is stated to have been repaid for Lord Pomfret's

first place as Master of the Horse, by the present of a pair of diamond ear-rings, of 1400*l.* value. One day, when she wore them at the Duchess of Marlborough's, the haughty Sarah, who well knew how to detect sinners of her own class, said to Lady Mary Wortley Montague, "How can the woman have the impudence to go about in that bribe?" "Madam," replied Lady Montague, "how can people know where wine is to be sold, unless there is a sign hung out?"

This appointment of the Earl of Pomfret was made in 1727;* yet, it appears from the following letters that the friendship between Lady Pomfret and Mrs. Clayton had an earlier date. She was at this time one of the Ladies of the Bedchamber to Queen Caroline; and her daughter, Lady Louisa, who afterwards married the son of Sir William Clayton, held the same appointment in the household of the Princess Amelia, daughter of George the Second. In the second of these letters, the Countess shows how much she valued the guidance of Mrs. Clayton, in steering her difficult track between contending interests in the Court—that of the Queen, and of the Princess of Wales—whose rival Courts divided the homage of the great world. The humility of that epistle,

* Collins' Peerage, vol. iv. p. 206.

from the lofty Lady Pomfret, is surprising: but some allowance must be made for the reverential style of the day.

COUNTESS OF POMFRET TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Easton, July 27th, 1725.

DEAR MADAM,

Having heard but to-day that the Princess has miscarried, I give you the trouble of this, to desire you will have the goodness to inform me whether I ought not to send or write to somebody to know how her Royal Highness does; for I would not appear too officious, but much less would I be too negligent; and I am sure none can tell me so well as you how to avoid both extremes.

And now, dear Madam, before I release you, give me leave to inquire how yourself has been since I last had the pleasure to see you; and, indeed, since I have had that of knowing you, I can scarce call anything else by that name. I cannot say whether you are more in my thoughts by the recollection of my past happiness, or the sense of my present want; but I am certain you are so much there, that I can relish no other company. And though I fear I shall not have my wish, I cannot help telling you what it is: that you would believe it an easy visit from your house to this, for a few days; I am sure my Lord would esteem himself honoured by Mr. Clayton's com-

pany, and I more happy than I can express. Dear Madam, (as you have often done,) once more pardon the liberty of

Your most obliged
and most faithful servant,
H. POMFRET.

I beg leave to present my humble service to Mr. Clayton and Miss Dyves. My Lord is most obediently yours.

Lady Pomfret afterwards attended the Princess of Wales (Caroline) to Richmond; and here Miss Dyves, who possessed all the subservient qualities of her aunt, Mrs. Clayton, exercised, probably, a needful surveillance over all that was going on during the absence of her relative and patroness. One letter from Miss Dyves about the same time, shows the mixture of economy practised among the higher circles in those days; and affords a specimen of the strict obedience in which Mrs. Clayton kept the young Maid of Honour. How many a responsive embarrassment might modern wardrobes betray, if pride permitted.

From the following letter, it appears some little *brusquerie* of Lady Pomfret's had been censured, or, at least, reported to Mrs. Clayton:—

COUNTESS OF POMFRET TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Richmond, October 14th, 1725.

DEAR MADAM,

If the pleasure I expressed in my letters to you made you think my heart entirely at ease and unguarded, it is the first time I ever deceived you, and I dare prophesy will be the last; but I considered that every letter I had troubled you with, had some fluster, or distress, to force me to write, and I could not but think, where so much was due, I might devote one sheet of paper only to gratitude: and for the second, I was in such a hurry, that I hardly could tell you I would deliver your letter, which I did the next morning; but, dear Madam, had you been in waiting, you would soon have found I was not without my fears, both real and imaginary. I know very well I must have committed a thousand blunders in these three weeks; but when I have the happiness to see you, I will sincerely tell you all my inadvertencies; for I am sure I never meant to do wrong, though if all I have said, as to my opinion of any one belonging to the family, was to be told, I have no apprehension on that score.

I found, as you told me, Miss Mordaunt very good-natured, so that I have been more free when with Miss Dyves and her alone, though I hope not to any excess; but I doubt not you will hear all my bad qualities when you come to town. Whatever they are, the Princess is too discerning not to know, but too good to take notice of; so that,

could I flatter myself by her obliging carriage into a forgetfulness of my own defects, I might be happy, but that is impossible.

This, dear Madam, is the true state of my mind your letter found me in. It was with inexpressible joy I opened and read it, till I came to that part where you seem to doubt, whether I shall not be such a brute to take ill the best and kindest of all my obligations to you—your advice. I leave you to imagine what I felt at that suspicion, and I am sure, if you knew, you would be sorry you had said it; but, dear Mrs. Clayton, if your own merits to me won't make you think me grateful, why should I trouble you with any declarations, since none I am capable of making but must come far short of my meaning. One thing more I must add before I release you, and that is, that your letters are very long a-coming; this I received yesterday is dated the 6th, and that before was dated the 1st, and did not come till the 9th. The Princess took notice of it too; so that among the rest of my fears, I apprehended she would think I had neglected to give it as soon as I received it. If you are so good as to let me have a line from you, to tell me the day I may hope to see you in town, direct to Hanover Square; for to that place I go on Monday morning.

I am, dear Madam, your most
obliged and affectionate servant,
H. Pomfret.

The family goes to London on Sunday sevennight.

The next epistle, from Miss Dyves, Maid of Honour to the Princess Amelia, is still more characteristic of ease and enjoyment.

Richmond, August 31st, 1725.

I received, dear Aunt, your very kind letter, which was a greater pleasure to me than I can express; I sent the enclosed the next morning to Monsieur de Montendre. I saw him a day or two ago; he desired me to tell you the reason he did not write to you was, that he had nothing particular to tell you. The Prince, and everybody but myself, went last Friday to Bartholomew Fair; it was a fine day, so he went by water, and I being afraid, did not go; after the Fair, they supped at the King's Arms, and came home about five o'clock in the morning. It is with very great impatience I expect the twelfth of next month, as anybody would do that waited for so great a pleasure as I do in that of seeing my dearest Aunt. The Princess is very good to me, and I have great reason to hope she is not dissatisfied with my behaviour; and I am sure, when I have the satisfaction of your approving it (besides an inward joy to myself of knowing I am doing right), it is the surest way of being thought well of in the world.

MISS DOROTHY DYVES TO MRS. CLAYTON.

October 11, 1725.

I am afraid my dear Aunt will think me troublesome in writing so soon again; it is to

tell you that Mrs. Hollins is dead, and to beg you will be so good to give me some directions about mourning, which I take to be for three months, and that at first I must not wear coloured shoes, nor fan, nor laced tuckers. I believe it will be right to make my blue velvet black, and since I must be dressed every day, I should think it right as well for the look, as the management, to buy a white tabby, which will save the velvet, and be a little variety, and not cost a great deal. I believe I must shiver in my black lustring at Richmond, till I can get other clothes ready. Since I begun this letter, I have another thought come into my head, which if you don't think amiss, I believe will be full as well, and that is, instead of buying a white tabby, having a white and gold for the Birthday, and after that day, take the coloured lining out and wear it for mourning, which I think will be very genteel and agreeable. However, I shall not fix on anything till you are so good as to let me hear from you.

I believe we shall have Lady Pomfret here a week longer, for the Duchess of Shrewsbury is ill of the gout; she was this week to have gone to Lady Hertford's christening, to represent the Princess, but she not being well, Lady Pomfret is to go. I think she does extreme well. It is not certain yet which day we go to London, but I believe we shall be there before you; however, I have the pleasure of knowing in reality, it will be but a few days, though to me it will seem a very

great while, the tediousness of which could be made up by no less joy than the happiness I am sure to have in seeing my dearest Aunt, who, I hope, believes me to be your most dutiful Niece, and very humble servant,

D. Dyves.

I beg my duty to my Uncle, and if it is not very impertinent, to be remembered to my Sister.

In a more gentle tone is penned an epistle from the first Lady Carteret, during her husband's first Vice-Royalty in Ireland. I here insert it as characteristic of the proud, fond mother, though it belongs to an earlier period than the present series of letters.

LADY CARTERET TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Dublin, December 19, 1724.

Madam,

It is with great pleasure that I congratulate dear Mrs. Clayton upon her Royal Highness's safe delivery. We think it such a blessing her being safe and well, that we do not repine at not having a Prince at some proper time. I desire the favour of you to assure her Royal Highness of my most humble duty and joy on this occasion.

As soon as I received your letter, I mentioned to my Lord your desire concerning Mr. Hamilton. He immediately ordered his arrears to be paid, and promises you with his humble service, that

upon the first vacancy of a lieutenantcy here, he will take a half-pay lieutenant from England, and so transfer Mr. Hamilton to the English establishment. We are both glad of serving one whom you call your particular friend.

I am much obliged to you for the account you gave me of my little family in Arlington-street. You distinguished Louisa very early, which I always thought a good omen to her. If she proves as well as Miss Dyves, I desire no more. For my own part, I have great reason to be vain of having, as you say, the Archbishop of Dublin for my lover. I do not know whether you are personally acquainted with him; but her Royal Highness, by whom he has the honour to be very well known, can tell you there are very few people that has his wit and spirit, or that is more difficult to be pleased. He really is a prodigy, considering he is fourscore years old. I do not naturally love to be the discourse of the public; however, if in this long absence it keeps me from being forgotten by my friends in England, I have reason to be satisfied; and I shall be particularly so if it keeps me in your remembrance, to whom I am, with great sincerity,

Dear Madam,

A faithful humble servant,

F. Carteret.

Mrs. Duncomb, who now sits with me, desires you will accept of her service. I beg mine to Mr. Clayton.

Among the most frequent of Mrs. Clayton's correspondents, was the lady mentioned in Lady Carteret's postscript. She was sister to Colonel Duncombe, and moved in the best society. These two ladies appear to have felt a very warm regard for each other; Mrs. Duncombe was a frequent visitor at Sundon. On the death of her brother, the following earnest appeal was made by her to her friend. In general, she will be found to be one of the most gossiping of that numerous band who enlightened Mrs. Clayton concerning all that was going on in the world around her.

MRS. DUNCOMBE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Chiswick, Wednesday night, October 8th.

On Monday last, dear Madam, I received the sad account of my brother, Colonel Duncombe's death; and how afflicting and heavy such a loss is, you well know. It is natural, I own, on such occasions, to give up oneself to grief, as to the most pleasing employment; but the earnest desire I had to make him easy in his life, makes me now desire to do what I know he earnestly wished to have done, which was to get his debts paid; and this has made me apply myself to some people, to know if any such thing was ever before mentioned, and I find it has; and has been

obtained in former reigns; and I am much encouraged to hope, that if I can get a petition delivered to the King, now at first by Mr. Pelham, and also the Queen spoke to, I may possibly obtain favour from them. Now, Madam, to do this last, this grateful office to my poor brother, raised my quite sunk spirits; and to whom can my heart open itself, or sue for relief, but to you, who are, by more than me, said to be goodness itself, and whose most generous temper was never by your friends sought to in vain; to you, therefore, I address myself, and when I have told you what I wish done, I leave it to you to do, or not to do, as you think best, having no doubt but you will do what is best for me.

In the first place, Madam, I have wrote to Mr. Pelham, which letter I send to you, and send it open, that you may read what I ask, and then seal it or not as you please. I write to him, because I have before been directed to do the same, and he has before read my letters to the King; and if it comes by your hand to Mr. Pelham, and that you desire him to speak with some sincerity to the King, I believe he will do it; and if you send to speak to him, I have reason to think, from what I have heard, that he will be glad to be so sent to.

Then, Madam, I must beg of you, if your health will permit you, that you will entreat the Queen to speak on my behalf to the King; and as, perhaps, the reading of a letter to her, as sent to

you, may be the shortest way of explaining my request, I have also wrote one to you wholly on this affair, which, if useless, may be burnt, and so, indeed, may all I say or said, if you think it most proper; for I depend entirely on your judgment, and shall be content, who, I think, if you interest yourself for me, by what is past, I might find some favour.

If you think these petitions not in the least that I do, and that others do, and that I should speak myself to Mr. Pelham and to Sir Robert Walpole, for he must be spoke to, not to oppose, I beg you will lay these papers by; and as I shall be in town next Monday, I will wait on you at any private house you will be so good to name for me, on Tuesday.

I beg, dear Madam, you will excuse my hurry, and, probably, my nonsense; for, indeed, I hardly know or see what to write; but you can make sense for me, and you judge so right in all things, that, in my present melancholy circumstances, it is unnecessary for me to frame excuses, or to say more than this truth, that I am for ever

Your most obliged servant,

S. Duncombe.

If you should be sick when this large packet comes to you, I shall vex myself to nothing, joined to what I already feel; pray order any one just to tell me how you do.

I fancy it would be best if you would take the

trouble to read my letter to Mr. Pelham, to himself, for then you may make him rightly understand it; and if he finds any fault, you may assure him it will pass as being wrote by a woman; and make him promise to read it all to the King.

CHAPTER VI.

Katharine Sedley, Duchess of Buckingham—Her royal descent—Her marriages—John Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham—The Duchess treats with the Royal Family for letting her house—Her affectation of State ceremony even in death—Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough—Edmond, Duke of Buckingham—Pope's lines on his death—Letter of the Duchess of Buckingham to Mrs. Clayton respecting the young Duke her son—An invitation to the Duchess's *Consort*—A present to a Court lady—The Princess Amelia—Her conduct as Ranger of Richmond Park—Countess of Wigtown—A Jacobite lady of quality—Court compliments—Princess Amelia at Bath and Bristol—Lady Pomfret misrepresented—Portrait of a Princess.

CHAPTER VI.

THE foregoing letters may present some information of the details and difficulties of a Court life, and serve as a picture of the every-day feelings of Ladies of the Bedchamber. Let us turn from the "précieuse ridicule," Lady Pomfret, to the Katharine Sedley, Duchess of Buckingham, who was among the motley-hued correspondents of Mrs. Clayton, and who never moved but as in a royal pageant—"More mad with pride than any mercer's wife in Bedlam."*

This singular woman was the acknowledged daughter of James the Second by Katharine Sedley, created by that Monarch Countess of Dorchester, and daughter of the noted wit, Sir Charles Sedley. Scandal, however assigned the parentage of the Duchess of Buckingham to Colonel Graham, who had been a lover of her mother's. James, however, gave her all the honours that could be appropriated to royal ille-

* Horace Walpole.

gitimacy; dignified her in her girlhood with the name of the Lady Katharine Darnley; bestowed upon her the dignity of a Duke's daughter, and empowered her to bear the royal arms, with some slight variation. She was married, when very young, to James Earl of Anglesea, from whom she was separated after a year's union, but who died shortly afterwards. She afterwards became the third wife of that compound of good and evil, John Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham; and their union, if we except the dangerous temptations of afternoons spent by the Duke in gaming, at Marybone Gardens, and other irregularities of conduct, was happy. Certain it is, that Katharine Duchess of Buckingham attained great influence over the pride and affections of her still fascinating husband, then in the fifty-ninth year of his age. Few men, however, bore more decidedly in their deportment the air of rank and refinement. His face, which was of a regular oval, was handsome, and his countenance bespoke at once, not only that bright intellect which dissipation had not impaired, but a sweetness which won upon the affections. The burst of laughter, so unbecoming to most physiognomies, was agreeable on his matchless face; few, it was allowed, exceeded him when young — none were more agreeable

when old. As is usual with men so admired and so favoured by nature and fortune, the character of the Duke was often misunderstood, and his vices exaggerated. His deportment, lofty to the great, but kindly to the poor, was declared to be haughty, whereas pride was no part of his fine nature. Meek in his resentments, but generous and candid, he would even ask pardon of his servants for reproofs uttered in passion. To his last Duchess he was a tender, indulgent husband, and liberal in money matters to her, contrary to his usual practice. In pecuniary affairs, the Duke presented a singular mixture of parsimony and carelessness; whilst saving in trifles, he was so negligent of his estates, that he would not even travel forty miles from London to visit them, and secure his own interests; and it was owing to his indifference that his garden at Buckingham House, in which he so greatly delighted, fell into the hands of a creditor, who insolently grazed his sheep and oxen under his Grace's windows. To this singular man, a relic as he was of the courtiers of Charles the Second, was the Lady Katharine united.

The Duchess of Buckingham assumed, nevertheless, all the *honours* of her birth, as she considered them to be. She "had the happiness to please," such was her own expression, "the man

of the finest sense and sharpest discernment,' and in so doing found her only pleasure. She became after his death, at the age of seventy-one, the guardian of his son, a minor, and the lofty possessor of Buckingham House — respecting which, we find in the Suffolk Letters a curious epistle from her, treating, in 1723, of granting a lease of that mansion to George the Second, then Prince of Wales. "Considering," she impertinently remarks, "the little care and regularity that is taken in the Prince's family, did his Highness give as much again as he might now have it for, it is possible one might repent it at the expiration of the lease. If their Royal Highnesses will have everything stand as it does, furniture and pictures, I will have 3000*l.* per annum; both run hazards of being spoiled, and the last, to be sure, will be all new bought when my son comes of age." She afterwards offered it on purchase for 60,000*l.*; the Princess of Wales having asked her at the Drawing-room, "if she would sell her fine house." The royal family, of whom the Duchess of Buckingham was thus speaking, were the objects of her avowed abhorrence; yet it did not prevent her treating with them, in hopes of driving a good bargain. She gave to the laughing world, indeed, a

burlesque of Jacobitism; maintained a sort of royal state, and affected a great devotion to the memory of her grandfather and father. She went to weep over the body of James the Second at Paris. One of the monks, seeing her emotion, thought it a proper opportunity to remark how ragged the pall was which was placed over the body, then kept unburied to be interred one day in England; but the Duchess did not offer to supply another. She had, occasionally, correspondence with the Chevalier, James Stuart, over whom she is said to have exercised an influence —a proof of what effrontery can effect over weak minds. At the Opera she appeared in robes, red and ermine, and her ridiculous assumption obtained for her the name of the Princess Buckingham.

When the Duchess found herself dying, she sent for Anstis the herald, and settled all the pomp of her funereal ceremony. She was afraid of dying before the preparations were ready: "Why," she asked, "won't they send the canopy for me to see? Let them send it, even though the tassels are not finished." And then she exacted, as Horace Walpole affirms, a vow from her ladies, that if she should become insensible, they would not sit down in her room until she was dead. Funeral

honours appear, indeed, to have been her fancy, for when her only son died, she sent messengers to her friends, telling them that if they wished to see him lie in state, she would admit them by the back-stairs. Such was the delicacy of her maternal sorrow.

But there was one match in pride and insolence for Katharine, Duchess of Buckingham; this was Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough. Upon the death of the young Duke of Buckingham, his mother endeavoured to borrow the triumphal car that had carried the remains of Marlborough to the grave; "No," replied the widowed Duchess of Marlborough, "the car that has carried the Duke of Marlborough's body shall never be profaned by any other." "I have sent to the undertaker," was the Duchess of Buckingham's rejoinder, "and he has engaged to make a better for 20*l*." On her death-bed, the latter expressed a wish to be buried by her father, James the Second, at Paris; "She need not," was the remark of Mr. Selwyn, "be carried out of England to be buried by her father."* And, indeed, the insolent assumption of the Duchess was not a trait of resemblance to the Stuart family, who, whatever were their vices, wore the

* Who was supposed by the ill-natured, to be Colonel Graham.

honours of royalty with as little offence as any race of monarchs that ever sat upon the throne.

The following letter is curious, as showing in what strait leading-strings the young Duke of Buckingham was kept by his arrogant mother. Edmond, Duke of Buckingham, the subject of the epistle, was a youth of the greatest promise. Being of delicate health, he was taken abroad by his mother, and resided for a long time on the Continent. He was admitted, in 1732, at Queen's College, Oxford, but remained there only eighteen months, owing to the natural modesty of his disposition, which made him shrink from assisting during the public Act, in 1733, when it is usual for the academical nobles to deliver orations. Young as he was, he was resolved to emulate the fame of his ancestors, and inheriting the undoubted courage of his father, he went to serve under his uncle, the Duke of Berwick, until the death of that brave general. The Duke then proceeded to Rome, but his constitutional malady, consumption, was now fast progressing. He died at Rome in 1735, having sustained his sufferings with great fortitude. "I will ride out the storm in the chair where I sit," was one of his dying expressions. His remains were brought to England and interred in the sumptuous mausoleum constructed by his

father, in the chapel of Henry the Seventh, at Westminster.

At his death the title became extinct, and a natural son of his father's, a Mr. Herbert, assuming the name of Sheffield, inherited, by the former Duke's will, the whole family estates, taking up his abode, after the death of the Duchess, in Buckingham House. Pope's beautiful lines on Edmond, the last Duke of Buckingham, are well known:—

> If modest youth with clear reflection crown'd,
> And every opening virtue flowing round,
> Could save a parent's justest pride from fate,
> Or add one patriot to a sinking state,
> This weeping marble had not asked thy tear,
> Or sadly told how many hopes lie here;
> The living virtue now had shone approv'd,
> The senate heard him, and his country lov'd.
> Yet softer honours, and less noisy fame,
> Attend the shades of gentle Buckingham;
> In whom a race for courage famed and art,
> Ends in the milder virtues of the heart;
> And chiefs or sages long to Britain given,
> Pay the last tribute to a saint in Heaven.

The famous Earl of Orrery, the kinsman of the Duke, offered to the sorrowing Duchess, whose worldly pride seems to have been unaccountably mingled with genuine affection, the consolation, that by her care had been formed "An offering fit for Heaven."

Life's rugged paths he learned with ease to tread,
To bear death's mighty shock, yet not to dread.
Let this console thee, though but short the race,
'Twas won with ardour, and obtained with grace,
And now far hence removed from mortal eyes,
He sits with seraphs and enjoys the prize.

The young nobleman was, at the time when the following letter was written, in his sixteenth year. The Duchess his mother survived him, dying in 1742. She wrote her own character, which was published after her death, and attributed to her every possible virtue that could adorn human nature. One fine and singular trait of this strange woman, redeems her memory. By the Duke's will, his two natural daughters were to be received into his house "*at the request of his wife*," who carefully educated them both in her own house, and afterwards at a school in Chelsea. This tribute of affection to the memory of her husband, would shock our present notions of decorum, especially as the mother of the young women was yet alive; but in those times, the sense of shame was an inconvenience rarely felt, and the standard of propriety, in some respects much loftier than in the present day, was altogether different. The Duchess, be it remembered, considered her illegitimacy as no disgrace, and her kindness to the

children of her husband was, in a person of her notions, a tribute of affection to his memory.

DUCHESS OF BUCKINGHAM TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Wednesday, March 1, 172$\frac{6}{7}$.

MADAM,

I beg the favour of you, to give my duty to her Royal Highness, and to wish her from me many, very many, of these days; a great cold, which hinders my dressing without a scarf, prevents my waiting on her on this occasion. I send my son this morning; but as Dr. Chamberlen has not been these two or three days well (with whom I choose to send him where I am not), he must be left to the philosopher, Mr. Costa, who will forget assisting him in a crowd, I fear. He is yet too bashful to make his own way, which, I think, is an error of the best kind, if it ever mends; in order to it, I tell him it is sometimes mistook so much to his disadvantage, as to be called folly, not modesty, yet till this representation has the effect I design, pray, Madam, if you happen to be near him, and should see him not behave himself well, be so good to him and me, as to whisper him to come home, which will be a little mortification, and consequently a correction; by which you will oblige,

Madam, your most humble servant,

K. BUCKINGHAM.

P.S.—It requires no sort of answer, yet could

not be sent by a message to you. If you, Madam, care for music, I believe you will hear it more easily, when the Princess does not go, in my box than in the others, whilst the crowding holds; and next Saturday, or any other, you will be extremely welcome.

A few more specimens of the Duchess's correspondence may not be unacceptable. In all these there is a lofty tone, even to the favourite of the Queen, very characteristic of "Princess Buckingham."

DUCHESS OF BUCKINGHAM TO MRS. CLAYTON.

MADAM,

Whoever knows you, is sorry at ever missing the favour of your company. I love no amusement but music, and one cannot often have that which is good at one's own houses. I chose this day as an agreeable one to me, and designed offering those of my acquaintance who happen to love music the coming to it, if they pleased. The form of tickets is a trouble I wished not to have taken; but, really, as nothing is ever reported just as the truth is, it has been spread as a very trifling *Consort*, and another kind of entertainment was to be (a masquerade); and least, by the mistake, company might walk out of the streets into one's rooms, I was obliged to give tickets to those who shall be welcome.

This is, Madam, my detail of a trifling matter, I have heard already lies of. I am sure I can with great truth say,

I am, Madam,
your most humble servant,
K. Buckingham.

DUCHESS OF BUCKINGHAM TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Madam,

Concluding you will take the liberty which I take, as it is meant, a plain country present to an agreeable acquaintance, and not a tribute to a court lady, I venture to send you a piece of doe; I designed Mr. Clayton a direct farmer's compliment, a piece of mutton; but my servants have mistook, and sent me only venison this time. I am going on Saturday to find fault with them for it; and next week a chine of mutton shall be sent, provided I may be secured from offending the house-keeper by such a clownish thing. I am sorry, Madam, I did not find you at home this evening.

I am, Madam,
your most humble servant,
K. Buckingham.

To return after this digressive account of the leaders of fashion, to the Countess of Pomfret,—the following letter from her gives an insight into some of the difficulties attendant upon the delicate

office of advising an inexperienced Princess. To comprehend fully Lady Pomfret's dilemmas, aggravated as they were by a sort of hereditary parade and hastiness of temper, it is necessary to refer to the characters of those with whom she had to deal.

Amelia Sophia, the second daughter of George the Second, was, at this period, only seventeen years of age, being born in 1711. At this time, her strong intellectual powers appear, from several of Lady Pomfret's letters, to have been developed. In after life, she became an accomplished and beautiful young woman, endowed with the feelings natural to her age, yet not permitted to indulge her affections. She remained, during the whole of her life, single, notwithstanding a suspected predilection for the Duke of Grafton, upon which Walpole has passed his usual sarcasms; relating, that on one occasion, the Princess stayed out so long hunting with that nobleman, that her attendants missed her, and she was afterwards found to have gone to a private house in Windsor Forest with the Duke, to the great indignation of her royal mother.

During her girlhood, Amelia was, as it appears from the letters here given, extremely popular; but her character deteriorated in the cramped atmo-

sphere of the Court. She is said to have become meanly inquisitive, gossiping, and impertinent; perhaps the active and powerful mind, devoid of any high object, may have preyed on itself. She was a great lover of horses, and passed much of her time in her stables. Gradually, as her beauty declined, her appearance became masculine and repulsive. She wore a round hat, and riding habit, in the German fashion; and to this coarse exterior, deafness and short-sightedness were soon added. George the Fourth was accustomed to relate an anecdote of himself,—that when driving to Bagshot, with Lord Clermont, who was dressed in a white great coat, and flannel hood, it was said, by several persons on the road, who mistook his Lordship for the Princess Amelia, "How good it is of the Prince of Wales to be the companion of his deaf old aunt."

In her conduct, as Ranger of Richmond Park, the Princess forfeited all her early popularity. She chose, illegally, to shut up that national property; an action was brought against her by the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, but she was partially successful in the trial. She was afterwards advised by the Attorney-General to allow ladders, that those who desired admission might climb over the wall; but her opponents

would not be satisfied with this concession; they pushed their claims, and were successful. The Princess, after conducting herself with great haughtiness upon this defeat, gave up the Rangership. Devoted to cards and snuff, her Royal Highness closed her uncomfortable and undignified existence, at the age of seventy-five, in 1786.

The first letter in this correspondence is interesting, as giving a delightful portraiture of the Princess Amelia, of whom Horace Walpole has drawn a very different character.

COUNTESS OF POMFRET TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Bath, April 22, 1728.

DEAR MADAM,

By your own heart, so sensible of friendship, you will easier imagine than I can describe the joy your letter gave me. Your kindness is still surprising, though not new, and every day gives me fresh occasion to love and value you; yet in the middle of all this, I must be angry too, for I hear you are in waiting. How can you answer it to yourself, to hazard a life so many others have more interest in preserving than yourself; and, since you cannot be recovered enough for that, why does not the Queen forbid you? I could fill more paper than I have in the world on this subject; but all I can say, I flatter myself you know already, and justice now obliges me to say some-

thing of my present situation—what I expected to meet withal, you know. Recollect all that has been said to you; and then I will tell you the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, which I have endeavoured to come at with all the capacity I have.

The Princess Amelia is the oddest, or at least one of the oddest princesses, that ever was known; she has her ears shut to flattery, and her heart open to honesty. She has honour, justice, good-nature, sense, wit, resolution, and more good qualities than I have time to tell you, so mixed, that (if one is not a *divel*) it is impossible to say she has too much or too little of any; yet all these do not in anything (without exception) make her forget the King of England's daughter, which dignity she keeps up with such an obliging behaviour, that she charms everybody. Do not believe her complaisance to me makes me say one *silible* more than the rigid truth; though I confess she has gained my heart, and has added one more to the number of those few, whose desert forces one's affection. All the rest of our affairs I leave to the description of others, and only tell you what I thought you liked most to hear.

I must end this with what is always uppermost in my thoughts: how much I ought to be, and how ready I ever shall be, to appear, on all occasions,

Dearest Mrs. Clayton's
most grateful, faithful, and sincere
friend and servant,
H. Pomfret.

COUNTESS POMFRET TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Bath, April 27th, 1728.

It is not the first time (by a great many) that I have found dear Mrs. Clayton as a guardian angel, though I do not believe they have the same indulgence to habitual, or rather natural weaknesses, that you have shown to mine. But I will confess the truth; your kind caution had very little effect, and I have suffered as bad a fit as ever you saw me have, till the Princess frightened me out of it, by being much out of order all day yesterday, and the night before. The occasion was this: she had a Drawing-room on Thursday, where it was extremely hot, and she (to oblige people) stayed above two hours; and, I believe, would not have gone then, (though far from well,) if I had not ventured to whisper what was o'clock. You may be sure I underwent a good deal of uneasiness before I took that liberty with a Princess of her age. I have told you in my last, in pretty strong terms, what she appeared to me. As to myself, I have examined what has passed, and hope I cannot be hurt from a fair recital. And I am sure you would be charmed to hear her notions of friendship, honour, and sincerity; sure they cannot be only repetition. I had another reason to say what I did, which was to set in your view a lady who is not of the same opinion with myself. I could say some things upon that subject would surprise you; but though I could trust you with

anything and everything, yet I dare not do so by the postman.

I am impatient to hear from you, and of you, (and always on your own account first;) the latter satisfaction I had to-day, by Dr. Tisier, who told me Dr. Friend wrote him word you were well, though too weak for waiting. Pardon me if I differ from you, when you say you had reasons to wait; I cannot find the least shadow of any, when your health is in the balance. Dear Madam, I fear my own pleasure, to-day, has carried me beyond yours; which I am sure, for a thousand causes, ought ever to be the first consideration of

Dearest Mrs. Clayton's
most affectionate and most faithful
friend and humble servant,
H. Pomfret.

Since I wrote this to you, Princess Amelia tells me the Queen has received no letter from me since I came to Bath; which surprises me very much, for I have inclosed all to my Lord, and received often, but not always, his answers to those letters I inclosed them in. The Princess-Royal wrote it to her sister, and we both believe the pages must have lost them. I know your goodness, without my desiring it, will help me in this affair with the Queen.

The Countess of Wigtown, to whom Lady Pomfret refers in the following letter, had an

hereditary antipathy to the Hanoverian family. She was the Lady Mary Keith, eldest daughter of William, ninth Earl Marischal, one of the warmest adherents of the Chevalier James Stuart. Her husband, James, sixth Earl of Wigtown, had attended James the Second, at St. Germains, and had afterwards suffered for his principles, by imprisonment in Edinburgh Castle. Clementina, the daughter to whom allusion is here made, became, after the death of his Lordship's brother, sole heiress of the family estates, the titles being extinct in 1747.

THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Bath, May 6th, 1728.

DEAREST MADAM,

Having every post the pleasure to hear by my Lord you are well, I might excuse you from the trouble of my epistles, if I had not a more than ordinary pleasure, in telling you how much I love you, and how impatiently I wish to see you: your kindness, dear Madam, in absence, or when present, is so constantly the employment of my thoughts, that it can produce only esteem and wonder for you; and as all goods have their evils with them, so it is my fortune to be for ever obliged, without being able to make any other return, than what is a new obligation to accept—

fruitless gratitude—and empty, though sincere, wishes of happiness to you in all things.

I hear from London, that it is said at St. James's, I have affronted a woman of great quality, by leaving of her out in an invitation to play at cards with the Princess. I am so altered about vexing myself for trifles, and there is in reality so little in this, that till you tell me the Queen is displeased, I will not be so about it: yet as it has an odd appearance in the terms I have put it, have the patience to hear the matter of fact, and then judge for yourself and me. When the Princess first came down, every person of quality (that ever went to Court,) both sent and came to inquire after her health. In two or three days she went to drink the waters; and between every glass, walked in Harrison's garden, where all people of fashion came and walked with her; the others (that were not known to her,) walked at a little distance. The third morning, Lady Frances Manners asked me if I knew my Lady Wigtown (a Scottish Countess); I said, I had never heard of her in my life, and believed she had not yet sent to the Princess; upon which, both she and the Duchess of Rutland smiled, and said, "No, nor will, I can tell you; for seeing the Princess coming to the pump the morning before, she had run away like a fury, for fear of seeing her; and declares so public an aversion for the King, &c., that she would not go to the ball made on the Queen's birthday: and some of

that subscription money remaining, the company had another ball, which she denied going to, and told all the people, it was because the Queen's money made it."

They laughed much at her open violence; and said, she would not speak to any one she thought a Whig: and had a child, called Clementina, who was at this place with her; all the company agreed in this discourse, but while it was about, she herself came into the gardens, and walked very rudely by the Princess, and pushed away the Duchess of Rutland and myself, that was near, and never offered to make the least courtesy, for two or three turns, and then went out.

After the Princess came home, she told me to send for six ladies to play at cards with her, which I did of the most considerable at Bath. Next day, Lady Wigtown went to Scotland for her whole life, as it was fixed she should long before the Princess came. Neither the Princess, nor myself, said one word when she passed by in that rude manner. This is a long story (as you see, about nothing), which I know is your aversion, (yet return, as usual, good for evil;) and though I have tired you, find out how guilty I am, and clear me. You know if I had done anything more, I would tell you truly.

I hear the Princesses in town are charmed with you, but that is common; here is one would charm you, and to so true a taste as yours, that is uncommon. Though you hate writing ever so much,

send me something of a letter, if it be but to forbid me plaguing you any more in this manner; and let me show you my love, by my obedience, which in all things is due to dear Mrs. Clayton, from her that is

Wholly yours,
HENRIETTA POMFRET.

The Countess of Pomfret entertained some apprehensions that her attendance on the Princess was not considered satisfactory, and in the following very courtier-like communication strove hard to maintain a good understanding with the Queen's favourite.

COUNTESS OF POMFRET TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Bath, May 19th, 1728.

DEAR MADAM,

As I have waited with extreme impatience, so I have received with extreme pleasure, this last mark of a perfect friendship. 'Tis my misfortune to be innocent without desiring to appear so, for fear of injuring another. I find that the love of great ones, is as fatal as their anger. I confess I have some time been involved in discourses I could wish to have avoided, but there was not anything said, but what on my account Mrs. Howard herself might have heard. 'Tis not possible to be with the Princess Amelia and not love her, at least not for hearts made like yours

and mine, and 'tis as impossible for her not to acknowledge a disinterested love. We both wish not to be strangers (as I fear we must be), when this journey is at an end; and in order to prevent that, by making my court too much, she may have hurt me. I am so certain of her goodness as not to doubt its coming about this way; and you know I am not apt to flatter myself in thinking I am over fortunate; and if I was that way given, this affair must convince me 'tis not in nature it ever can be so.

Pardon me, dearest Mrs. Clayton, if in that last, I forgot for a moment the happiness I have in you, which, when I reflect on, I own with the utmost gratitude, is a recompence for all other wants: and that gives me still fresh uneasiness to think what a worthless friend I offer you, in return for the most agreeable and most deserving one in the world. And you do me justice, dear Madam, when you think I am constantly desirous to hear of your health, for which I have known more real pain than for anything besides. I am very sorry you left the country so soon, since you found it did you good, and though I should miss seeing you at my first coming, I could even wish, for the sake of a health so truly dear to me, you were in the air again for some time.

What you say of the Princess's health is adapted so to her taste, that I knew I could not make your court better to her than by reading those few lines of your letter. As to Lansdowne,

she goes in the coach there sometimes, and is always better after it, though it is not an amusement she is fond of; yet you may depend upon it, I shall put it as forward as I can. Her being in a hot, close place, long, is impossible, for she never goes to any, except her journey to Bristol, and then the heat of the weather and crowds of people altogether disordered her very much. I hope I need not tell you that all the precaution was taken imaginable that there should be no danger in her going, and as the water was perfectly safe, it was certainly more easy and agreeable. Her behaviour there, and at all times, has certainly done the King's interest a great deal of good in these parts, no longer disaffected. I wish, in your clever way, you would take notice of that to the Queen, as you find it proper.

There is another thing I must mention to you, and that is, concerning Salisbury; the people there are in great expectation of her, but it is not possible to go and come in a day without running too great a hazard of making her ill. I know the Bishop's Palace used to be generally used for these occasions; and may be if the Bishop offered it for one night, it might tempt the Queen to order an expedition there, which certainly would please the country. If you think fit to do anything about this, do not let it be thought the Princess's inclination, for she has none about it, and the beginning of June is soon enough.

I give you, dear Madam, a thousand thanks

for inquiring after my health; since you think it worth your while, I will tell you it is better than at any time since I have known you, though I do not drink the waters. I wish my political constitution was as much mended; it is impossible for anybody to intend better; but how it appears at St. James's, I do not know, but wish you would tell me truly, whether you think if it was to do again, I should be sent. Pardon my inquisitiveness, and if you please answer me. I have many things to say to you that this paper will not hold, nor will my thoughts at this time admit of many; for once Mrs. Howard* shares them with you, though in my affections you reign alone, to whom I am with gratitude and sincerity

A most unlucky, but most faithful and affectionate friend.

I had forgot Mrs. Titchburne, but not the thanks I owe you on her account; all she says is an invention from the beginning to the end. I could tell many impertinences of hers; but they are below my fretting at, consequently much below your reading.

* Subsequently Countess of Suffolk, Mrs. Clayton's rival at Court.

CHAPTER VII.

Lord Widdrington: a condemned Jacobite—Imprisoned in the Tower—His letter from the State Paper Office—His petition—Princess Amelia notices him at Bath—Distress of Lady Pomfret at the idea of this being misrepresented—The Queen and the Countess of Berkshire—The sons of Bishop Burnet — Governor Burnet — Judge Burnet — Letter from Dr. Gilbert Burnet—Voltaire—His residence in England—His letter to Mrs. Clayton.

CHAPTER VII.

Among the many excellent qualities evinced by Queen Caroline, her compassion for the unfortunate Jacobites was not the least remarkable; and the Princess Amelia appears to have imbibed the same gentle feelings towards the sufferers of that party. Her conduct to the individuals mentioned in Lady Pomfret's next letter is certainly both graceful and Christian-like.

William, the fourth Lord Widdrington, who is mentioned in terms of respect by Lady Pomfret, was one of the first to join in the insurrection of 1715; he surrendered at Preston, and was committed to the Tower. On being impeached for high treason, he had pleaded guilty; and when brought up to receive sentence, had stated that mercy had been promised to him by the two royal generals. He, therefore, expressed a hope that mercy would be shown to him, and that his five children, already deprived of their mother, would not be reduced to a still more deplorable

condition than that in which they were then placed by his errors. Sentence of death was, however, passed upon him; but he was reprieved from time to time. During his captivity, the greatest privations and the most cruel anxieties tried the fortitude of this nobleman, then still very young, his first marriage having been contracted during his minority. The following letter, discovered in the State Paper Office, probably addressed, for there is no direction, to Thomas Townshend, then Secretary of State, speaks of his misfortunes in touching terms:—

ORIGINAL LETTER OF LORD WIDDRINGTON.

(No address.)

Tower, Jan. 24th, 1716.

SIR,

No person who has the honour to know you can more sincerely rejoice at your safe and long-wished for return with his Majesty than myself. I most heartily congratulate with you upon it, and wish I had any better way in my power of expressing my grateful sense of your past favours. I still rely upon the same goodness and generous friendship I have hitherto experienced, hoping you will continue to be an advocate with his Majesty for his further mercy, and some maintenance for me and my distressed family. I beg you will give me leave to recommend my unfor-

tunate brothers to your favour, particularly one of them who is still in Newgate, and has joined with his fellow-prisoners in an humble petition to his Majesty. I should be proud of doing the like by your means, and only defer it till I have your approbation, which would add to the many favours already received by

Sir, your most obliged and
most obedient humble servant,
W. WIDDRINGTON.

Endorsed, Lord Widdrington.

The petition, also extracted from the same source, affords a true picture of ruined fortunes, which were, indeed, never recovered:

PETITION OF WILLIAM (LATE LORD) WIDDRINGTON.

SHEWETH,

That your petitioner was seised as tenant in tail of his paternal estate, of above 3000*l.*, part of which has been sold for 34,400*l.* for the use of the public, and the whole is forfeited from him and from his family for ever:

That he was likewise seised as tenant by courtesy, of the estate of his late wife deceased, of the value of about 800*l.* per annum in land, with one coal mine, and three-eighth parts of another, and some uncertain rents arising by way-leaves, and all which is forfeited during your petitioner's life only, and is decreed by the com-

missioners and trustees for the public to descend (after his death) to his issue by his said late wife, and is in the meantime to be preserved from waste, which your petitioner had no power to commit:

That the river Tyne has lately broke in upon the richest part of this estate, which is every day liable to more damage, and will be very chargeable in repairing:

That the old seam of coal being near wrought out, and not likely to yield any profit of engines, which were set up at a great expense for draining the water, have neither been kept in repair for some time past, whereby not only the little remainder of said old seam is overflowed, and the pits ready to fall in, but the prospect of gaining a new one will be irretrievably lost to the reversioner, and the rents of lands (the tenants in a great measure depending on the coal-works) will be very much lessened.

The petition goes on to pray that his estate may be vested in Charles Earl of Carlisle during the petitioner's life—Charles Earl of Carlisle, "being guardian to reversioner;" and "that the profits of the same may be, such part as his Majesty shall think fit, applied to the maintenance of the petitioner and his distressed family, who have entirely lost so great an estate, and depend on his Majesty's bounty."

Lord Widdrington had married, in the first in-

stance, Jane, the daughter of Sir Thomas Tempest; but his second wife was a lady of the name of Graham. After nearly two years' imprisonment, he received his discharge under the Act of Grace, and retired to Bath, where he remained, in great poverty, until his death in 1743. The title, conferred by Charles the First upon a loyal member of this ancient Northumbrian family, has since been extinct.

Lady Pomfret was among the most attentive of Mrs. Clayton's correspondents. She seldom allowed more than two or three days to elapse without favouring her friend with an epistle.

FROM THE COUNTESS OF POMFRET TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Bath, May 27th, 1728.

DEAREST MADAM,

Having troubled you with a long letter, last post, you will, I believe, wonder upon what pretence I renew my importunity so soon; but I know your good-nature too well, not to be sensible you like to employ it, especially for a person that merits it. To my story, then. I must tell you, when first the Princess came to Bath, there was a great number of Roman Catholics here, and some very considerable ones, amongst them the late Lord Widdrington and his lady; you know he was pardoned by the late King, and favoured

afterwards by the Parliament. Since both these things he has behaved himself with becoming respect; and for her part, she is a woman well born and well bred, and a Protestant. Some time ago, the Princess saw me speak to her at the Pump, where she was inquiring how her Royal Highness did; and then the Princess was so obliging as to say a word or two to her, which had such an effect upon all of that sort in this city, that is hardly to be imagined, and they all speak of the Princess Amelia as of something that has charmed them ever since. Yesterday, in the walks, the same Lady Widdrington came near the Princess, who took much notice of her, and she walked some time with us. Mrs. Titchbourne was by, and much discomposed at it; from which I feared her ingenuity might make a crime of a rebel's wife, that did not come to the King and Queen, being so regarded, and that, upon her additions and alterations, the Princess might be blamed for that humanity and goodness that is the delight of all reasonable people.

You see, dear Madam, Mrs. Titchbourne has found the way to give me terror; and when I think she can attack the Princess Amelia, I can no longer be content only to despise her. I know no antidote against malice like yourself; and believe me, in serving this Princess, you will please yourself. After we came home, I told her my fears, and she agreed in them; upon which I said, "I knew one that had sense and good-

nature enough to prevent them." She smiled, and said, "Your good friend, Mrs. Clayton. You must write to her." You see, dear Madam, she knows you enough to guess your name by your *carracter*, though I often tell her, and she believes, to know you more and love you more is the same thing. I shall not wonder when this arrives to you; but I should be much surprised if she could ever esteem anybody that makes their approach through flattery, and only for interest. In short, if a more advanced age and a sharp experience do not quite metamorphose her, her service would be paradise to an honest heart.

I am sure I have spoke mine so much to you, that if I was not quite sure of yours, it would be madness; but to trust you, and to be trusted by you, has been, and will ever be, the chief satisfaction of my life, who am entirely

Dearest Mrs. Clayton's
most faithful and most
affectionate humble servant,
H. Pomfret.

Mrs. Titchbourne, it is presumed, was not more a friend of Mrs. Clayton than of Lady Pomfret. In Courts there is sure to be no lack of rivalries and jealousies; and it is very evident, that of St. James's was at this period not deficient in such characteristics.

It appears that poor Lady Pomfret did not im-

prove in her powers of conciliation, as we may infer from what follows:—

COUNTESS OF POMFRET TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Tunbridge Wells, June 30th, 1728.

DEAREST MADAM,

Had I not expected, almost every day, Dr. Freind, you had been troubled with me before: though I think you will not let me use that expression; and indeed the unwearied goodness you show me leaves no room to imagine that you think me any; and it is only from judging how little I deserve, makes me write in that style. By all I can find of my own affairs, that person we suspected,* has left nothing unsaid of any sort that can injure me, in every place where I can feel it worse, and it is from you I only can know how far it has prevailed. I find the concern I showed at Richmond is turned on me, as a sure proof I was guilty of all that could be said; and the belief that I am much happier in the Princess's favour than I am is so fixed, that I fear they will not quit me till I am entirely destroyed with the Queen. I endeavour to be, or rather appear easy in this situation, that I may not give fresh occasions of complaint at Court, or disturbance to the Princess, whose charming disposition ought to meet nothing but happiness. If I could hear you were well, or could hope to see you soon; I indeed feed upon and indulge that thought, for on that

* Apparently Mrs. Titchbourne.

side only I see joy, and there I always must, whilst I live.

Amongst other things, they say I have disobliged everybody at Bath. I wish that were thoroughly inquired into, and it would be found much otherwise. The health of my body depends so much on my mind, that you will readily guess, after what I have said, that I am as ill as ever, my cough only excepted. But what is denied to me, I hope is possessed by my friend; and that all things are as you write, conducive to your health and happiness in every respect, which, as none ought to wish it more, so none can, than

Dearest Mrs. Clayton's
most faithful, most affectionate, and
constant friend and humble servant,
H. Pomfret.

The following letter, from the Countess of Berkshire, shows how greatly the manners of our Court are altered since the day when the Queen thought it not beneath her dignity "to take a dish of coffee" with a favourite subject. Etiquette has since arisen to a melancholy height, as tending to sever the monarch from the people.

Madam,

As her Majesty has told me she intends me the honour of seeing my house, and drinking a dish of coffee with me, I take the liberty of giving you this trouble, to desire you will (any quarter

of an hour that is most convenient to you) let me wait upon you to be informed in what manner I am to receive the Queen; for I should be extremely concerned to omit the smallest particular of showing that duty I ought to pay to her Majesty. And really, Madam, my life has been led so retired and remote from Court, that I am sensible I am quite ignorant of the behaviour that is due to Majesty; therefore desire you will name the time I may wait upon you. Excuse this trouble, and believe me, Madam,

Your obliged humble servant,

Ca. Berkshire.

Among those who were largely indebted to Mrs. Clayton's good offices, and who acknowledged their obligations with cordial respect, were the three distinguished sons of the eminent Bishop Burnet. It is frequently said, that there is but one generation of talent; but the sons of Bishop Burnet were instances which contradicted that assertion. It is true that they acquired not the political influence which their father attained, but he was, in some respects, favoured by circumstances; the events of the Revolution making many men conspicuous, who would otherwise only have passed their lives in a private sphere. The literary talents, and the erudition of Bishop Burnet, would scarcely, under a different rule to

that of the sagacious William and Mary, have placed him in influence so near the throne. These brothers were the offspring of the Bishop's second wife, a descendant of the Buccleugh family, and a lady equally endowed with understanding, beauty, and temper.

William Burnet, the eldest of the Bishop's sons, was educated for the profession of the law; in 1720 he suffered with the bulk of society, from the failure of the South Sea Bubble; he was then in possession of a place under Government of 1200*l.* per annum; but he resigned that post, and went to America in the capacity of Governor of New York and the Jerseys. Here his conduct was truly unexceptionable; yet on the accession of George the Second, in order to make room for some especial favourite of that monarch's, Governor Burnet was removed to the Massachusetts. His spirits sank under the injustice; nor was his situation amended on arriving at Boston, where he was received with unusual pomp. No fixed salary was assigned to his post by the General Assembly; a protracted altercation with that body ultimately arose; his claims were pressed with warmth and perhaps with too much vehemence. Harassed by his disappointments and difficulties, he was seized with a fever, of which he died, in September,

1729. The Assembly atoned, as they thought, for their injustice and persecution of this eminent and injured man, by a pompous funeral at the public expense; and his memory was long honoured in America. Though inflexible in claiming, according to his instructions from England, a fixed salary, he was not grasping nor avaricious. He was a man of stern integrity, but of easy and pleasing manners. His conversation was full of spirit, but his deportment was irreproachable, except in the eyes of the over zealous and over rigid. It is said, that to the over long religious exercises in the house of his father, Governor Burnet attributed a distaste, in after life, to religious worship; a most unfortunate but not unfrequent result of that zeal which does not regard the weakness of childhood, nor, indeed, the general infirmity of our nature.

"Will your Excellency," inquired a grave senator of the Congress, an Independent, who retained the habit of hearing grace sitting, "like to have grace said sitting or standing?"

"Any way, just as you please," was the reply, which shocked many of its hearers. William Burnet was not happy in his first marriage; his wife, a daughter of Dr. George Stanhope, Dean of Canterbury, a beautiful and accomplished woman, had married him with a predilection

for another person; and although her husband was a gentleman of superior talents and virtue, she pined away, and died of silent grief. Governor Burnet was the author of a tract entitled "A View of Scripture Prophecy."

Gilbert Burnet, the second brother, was educated like William, at Oxford, residing afterwards two years at Leyden. He was appointed chaplain to George the First in 1718, and became the author of several masterly works, more especially an answer to Mr. Law's second letter to the Bishop of Bangor. He was also pre-eminent in the Hoadleian Controversy, in which he aided Bishop Hoadley. Cut off in early life, he yet left a high reputation for strong powers of reasoning, accurate knowledge, and liberality of mind, and he would, it was presumed, have become an eminent divine, had his existence been prolonged.

Thomas, the youngest son, was of a very different character to his brothers. He had their ability, but not their steadiness and good sense. He entered the profession of the law, and became a wild, reckless man, and was even suspected of being one of the Mohocks. Young Davenant having been attacked by a gang of these ruffians, and having his chair run through with a sword, a report ensued that Thomas Burnet was among

the miscreants. His delinquencies, occurring during the life-time of his father, grieved the Bishop to the heart. One day, observing that his youngest son looked grave, the Bishop inquired upon what subject he was meditating? "A greater work," was the reply, "than your Lordship's History of the Reformation." "And what is that?" rejoined the Bishop. "My own reformation," was the rejoinder. "I shall be heartily glad to see it," returned the Bishop, "though I almost despair of it."

It ensued, however, after years of folly, and the young Mohock rose to be the Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas. He died in 1753, leaving behind him a character for integrity and benevolence; and was accounted a sincere friend, and a sensible companion. He was a voluminous writer, chiefly on political subjects in defence of the Whigs; of some verses, and of an interesting life of his father, published with the Bishop's History of the Reformation. On religious subjects, Judge Burnet's opinions appear to have resembled those of his eldest brother, and they may either be termed liberal or lax, according to the prepossessions of the reader. The following clause in his will, excited much animadversion.

"I think it proper in this solemn act to declare, that as I have lived so I trust I shall die in the true faith of Christ, as taught in the Scriptures, but not as taught and practised in any one visible church that I know of, though I think the Church of England is as little stuffed with the inventions of men as any of them, and the Church of Rome is so full of them, as to have destroyed all that is lovely in the Christian religion."

This clause led to the publication of a pamphlet entitled "The true Church of Christ, which, and where to be found," &c.

The following letter of William Burnet announces, what appears to be the first introduction of the beaver into England.

FROM WILLIAM BURNET, GOVERNOR OF NEW ENGLAND, TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Boston, July 7th, 1729.

MADAM,

I presume to present you with a young beaver alive, which I have not heard has yet been seen in England. And as this is a famous animal for its industry and policy, and, I think, peculiar to America, I hope it will not be unworthy of your acceptance, if it has the good fortune to come over alive. Mr. Bacon, brother to Sir Edmund Bacon of Norfolk, has taken charge

of it; and as he is very obliging, I know he will be as careful of it as possible. It will require to be kept within stone walls, or iron bars, or to be chained, because it will eat through anything of wood, when its teeth are longer. The creature is tame enough, and will not bite unless provoked; but it is best not to trust it. It will eat any sort of victuals, but chooses fish, or greens, or the bark of poplar trees; but bread, and grass, and leaves will do.

I need not acquaint you with the art of this creature, but I may say, that I myself have seen trees, that I was told were cut down by them, which have fallen exactly across a brook where they wanted to have them lie; and about these trees, twigs of brush so twisted together, to make a hedge, that I could not undo them anywhere without cutting. All this work was to hold a dam of clay, which they had made to raise the water; and when we broke down some of it, we found it repaired next morning, for they always work in the night, and only then. This reminds me to mention, that it should have a flat tub of water to dabble in, which is natural to it.

I have likewise sent along with it a fur of a white beaver, which is very rare, and comes from the northern parts of this continent only, and was presented to me lately by the chief of an Indian nation. If the young beaver should die, as I am afraid it will, being a very tender animal, this fur

will serve to give you some idea of it when full grown.

If what I take the liberty to send you now as a curiosity, should, in your opinion, deserve her Majesty's casting an eye upon it, I shall think myself very happy in finding anything that can give occasion to the least part of that variety of conversation with which you have the honour to entertain so great a Queen.

And I hope, Madam, that if I am unsuccessful, you will have the goodness to excuse my mistaken endeavours, that were sincerely intended to express the sentiments of gratitude and respect, with which I have the honour to be,

Madam,
your most obliged, most obedient,
most humble servant,
W. Burnet.

His brother Gilbert's letter, it will be seen, is merely introductory to one of his polemical tracts.

DR. GILBERT BURNET TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Wednesday.

Madam,

I make bold to trouble you with a trifle of mine, which, I can assure you, I would not have published, if I could have helped it. But, since it is out, I am under an obligation of sending it to you, Madam, not expecting that you will undergo

the penance of reading it, but only that you will accept it as a mark of my respect. I will not disturb the Duke* with such things, but I venture to inclose one to you for the Duchess. I would have waited on her Grace with it myself, if I had not been for some days so ill that I was not able to make visits. As soon as I get strength, I will wait upon you.

In the meanwhile I am, Madam,
your most humble and obedient servant,
G. BURNET.

Amongst the many distinguished personages who found it their interest, or pleasure, to pay court to Mrs. Clayton, was Voltaire; a quarrel with his friend, the Duc de Sully, and a visit to the Bastille, of several months' continuance, were followed by an order to Voltaire to quit Paris. He was in England during three years, quitting it in 1728; the first edition of the Henriade, originally entitled "La Ligue," was published by subscription, and brought a large sum of money. It here was dedicated, in English, to Queen Caroline. In England, also, Voltaire wrote his Tragedy of Brutus; and in the society of the lettered in this country he found a far greater congeniality of sentiments than in Paris. The works of Wool-

* The Duke of Marlborough, at whose house Mrs. Clayton was on a visit.

aston, Tindal, and Collins, were then in fashion, and the utmost freedom of discussion, and latitude of opinions were allowed; and with great brilliancy of intellect, there were combined the most speculative notions on religious subjects, even among believers, at this period.

Voltaire was delighted with the civil and religious liberty which he witnessed during his residence in England; and this is said to have exercised a great influence over his subsequent opinions. The philosophy of Newton and Locke had given an impulse to intellect in this country, which raised her to a position in Europe never since lost. Voltaire likewise composed in England his "*Lettres Philosophiques*," *&c.*, also called "*Lettres sur les Anglais.*" On his return to Paris, he addressed to Mrs. Clayton the following graceful and complimentary letter, which, being written with his own hand, in English, may be regarded as a curiosity.

VOLTAIRE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Paris, 18th April, 1729, (N.S.)

MADAM,

Though I am out of London, the favours your Ladyship has honoured me with, are not, nor will ever, be out of my memory. I will remember as long as I live, that the most respect-

able Lady who waits and is a friend of the most truly great Queen in the world, has vouchsafed to protect me, and receive me with kindness, while I was at London. I am just now arrived at Paris, and I pay my respects to your Court before I see our own. I wish, for the honour of Versailles, and for the improvement of virtue and letters, we could have here some ladies like you. You see my wishes are unbounded; so is the respect and the gratitude I am with,

Madam,

your most humble obedient servant,

VOLTAIRE.

CHAPTER VIII.

Dr. Alured Clarke—His benevolence—His Essay towards the character of Queen Caroline—Stephen Duck, the Thresher—His education—The first books which he studied—Studies Paradise Lost—Early attempts at verse—Meets with encouragement—Undertakes a poem of some length, entitled "The Thresher's Labour"—The Shunamite—Dr. Alured Clarke writes to Mrs. Clayton respecting him—The Doctor's opinion of Whiston—Her Majesty patronises Stephen—Effect upon him of his good fortune—Dr. Clarke advises Mrs. Clayton on the Thresher's future proceedings—Books necessary for him—Mrs. Clayton's zeal in his behalf—He is sent to her from the country—Dr. Clarke recommends him to Pope—Further directions of the Doctor as to Stephen's reading—Illness of the Thresher's wife—The Bishop of Salisbury proposes to print his works by subscription—Stephen's wife is sent for to Kew—His poems pirated—Swift's epigram on the Thresher—Stephen Duck studies for the Church—And is ordained—Is appointed Keeper of the Queen's Select Library—Then Preacher at Kew—Is preferred to the Rectory at Byfleet—His supposed unhappiness from his change of position—He commits suicide.

CHAPTER VIII.

Another of Mrs. Clayton's devoted friends and constant correspondents, was Dr. Alured Clarke, "whose name," observes his biographer, "deserves to be recorded among the benefactors of mankind." He was born in 1696; became a Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and in May, 1723, was collated to the Rectory of Chilbolton, in Hampshire, and installed Prebendary of Winchester in the same month. He became one of the Chaplains both to George the First, and afterwards to George the Second, in 1731; was promoted to a Prebend's stall in Westminster; and, in 1740, after the Queen's death, to the Deanery of Exeter. Thus possessed of large preferment, this excellent man resolved never to have more than a sum reserved of his revenues that was sufficient to defray his funeral; the whole surplus of his income was spent in works of charity. By his exertions, the institution of the Hospital at Winchester for the

sick—the first of the kind in England, except those in London—was established in 1736. The orders and constitution of that Infirmary, which were drawn out by Dr. Clarke, displayed great knowledge of political economy, at that time little understood. But his valuable life was cut short, and a life of much physical suffering closed when only in his forty-sixth year, in 1742.

As a literary character, Dr. Clarke's claims to fame are founded chiefly upon his published sermons, and upon his well known "Essay towards the character of Queen Caroline." This composition was anonymous, and was long attributed to Lord Hervey; but later authorities have decided it to be the production of Dr. Alured Clarke. It is written with great feeling and eloquence, and with the enthusiasm of an ardent friend, as well as with the deep respect of a faithful subject. And it is evident, from the tenour of the following correspondence, in which the Queen's goodness of heart, and her graceful condescension, are referred to, that Dr. Alured Clarke had cogent reasons for his respect and admiration.

Many of Dr. Alured Clarke's letters refer to one of the humble objects of Queen Caroline's bounty, whom she patronised, perhaps to his sorrow, and

whose fate may not be inaptly compared to that of Burns—saving the genius. The minute interest taken by Mrs. Clayton—that is, the Queen—for the latter was the medium only of her Majesty's bounty—in this poor man, is a fine illustration of the Queen's character. Some account must, however, be here given of the object of such humane interest.

This meritorious man, Stephen Duck, was a native of Wiltshire, and was born in the humblest rank of life; he was a labourer, and when public notice was first attracted to him, was distinguished by the appellation of "The Thresher." He received no more education than could be derived from a village school, where he remained until the age of fourteen, and was instructed in reading, writing, and arithmetic. It was sufficient, however, to excite in his breast a love of inquiry, and a desire of acquiring knowledge; feelings meritorious in all, but more particularly in those who have to struggle against the difficulties of ignorance, and who are placed in a sphere of life that demands an untiring industry and energy, to be applied to an occupation which has for its object the provision of a daily maintenance.

Stephen, however, was not dismayed; nor satisfied with procuring a subsistence alone. His

first great object was to regain the knowledge of arithmetic, which he had lost since he left school; for this purpose he worked beyond the usual time, and devoted his extra earnings to the purchase of a book on arithmetic, which, when gained, enabled him to attain his purpose. Encouraged by this his first success, he toiled with an increasing ardour, procured two more books upon the higher branches of the same subject, then, curtailing the hours of repose, dedicating the time thus gained to their perusal, he became, ere long, a very tolerable master of this most useful and essential portion of science. His exertions were stimulated and his zeal rewarded, by meeting with a man who, though in no higher grade of life, was animated by the same desires as himself. The two became sworn friends, laboured on together, and in process of time progressed from the study of arithmetic to such works as Milton, the Spectator, Dryden's Virgil, Telemachus, Ovid, and Seneca. These books were part of a small library in the possession of Stephen's friend, who had resided for two or three years in London, and had there learned to value and prize his small collection.

One of their greatest treasures was a small English Dictionary. It was by the aid of this solely that he was enabled to read Paradise

Lost. Its language, its style, had all the difficulties of a foreign tongue to him, and it was only after perusing it three or four times that he was able to enter into its spirit, and to appreciate some of its beauties.

The study of these and a few other books instilled into him something of the spirit of a poet. He had an ear for music, and delighted in harmonious sounds, became a tolerable judge of metre, and at length attempted to put his own thoughts into verse. A hundred little things were written and destroyed as soon as finished: he was his own critic, and was well aware of the errors arising from a rude pronunciation, and a deficiency in the command of language.

These poetical effusions were, though unseen, by no means unknown; his companions and friends looked upon him as a scholar, and treated him with that respect which his superiority of intellect inspired. His name began to be well known in his own little neighbourhood, and a few verses accidentally falling into the hands of some of the surrounding gentry, they became much interested in him. Mr. Stanley, the Curate mentioned by Dr. Alured Clarke, found the means of rendering his life less laborious, and thereby encouraging him in his literary pursuits. At the

suggestion of this kind friend, he undertook a longer poem, descriptive of his own life, and entitled "The Thresher's Labour." Though many parts of this poem were not unpleasing, and there were scattered here and there some few happy similes, its chief merit, it must be confessed, was rather in the circumstances of the author; and in the present day, when instances of native genius are less rare, and we have had a Burns from a class of life no less humble, it would never have attracted the notice it did, nor have obtained for its author the patronage and interest of so many distinguished men.

The "Shunamite," his next attempt, met with still greater success; and whether from the novelty of the attempt, or from some exaggerated notions of its merits, some people did not hesitate to declare that Stephen Duck, with all his defects, was a greater genius than Pope; and that the author of the Shunamite was likely to become the best poet of his age. Happily for the credit of English taste, this opinion was far from general, and the much-lauded Stephen Duck has fallen into oblivion, while the name of Pope is familiar to every lover of English literature.

The following relates wholly to the concerns of this indigent, meritorious man:—

DR. ALURED CLARKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Winchester, Aug. 18th, 1730.

MADAM,

My Lord Tankerville having carried some of the Thresher's poetry from this country to Windsor, I fancy you will not dislike the account you'll find of him in another cover, which I send by this post, and will, I hope, come safe to your hands. The man's name is Stephen Duck, and I am told the Curate's letter was written about two years ago. By the best information I can meet with, there is no reason to doubt of the verses being made by him, as extraordinary as such a supposition may appear. However, I shall be better able to judge of this when I see the man, who I believe will come to me in a little time. We have some people of taste for such performances, who think none but a Thresher could write the Thresher's Labour, and that the author of the Shunamite must be the best poet of the age; no one that could write it would appear in a borrowed person. And at the same time that they can see some faults, they think the Thresher, with all his defects, a superior genius to Mr. Pope.

I don't pretend to give my own judgment when I put the pieces into your hand, because I find a great friend of Mr. Thomson's very zealous in decrying our Thresher's merit, out of an apprehension of his rivalling Mr. Thomson* in the

* The author of The Seasons.

esteem of the public; but after all, if Stephen Duck be the author of these poems, he has, accidentally, had much greater advantages from his want of education, than he could possibly have had otherwise: for it seems he has only read the best books, and has contracted no false turn of mind by such writings as cost other people, of all professions and studies, more pains to forget, than they can prevail with themselves to take, and indeed have time and abilities for, though they *should* be well disposed to clear their heads of all foul and unnatural mixtures.

And though it would be very hard such a genius should be left to work in a barn, 'twould probably ruin him on the other hand, if he was at once removed into the upper part of life, and to pass out of his present state of simplicity into the other extreme, without having his mind duly seasoned by a gradual change. Perhaps a Prince of Charles the Second's humour would have made him Poet Laureat, and at the same time kept the flail in his hand. I wish anything had been in Mr. Whiston's hand but a pen, which he makes the worst use of of any man I know that is not legally proved a lunatic.

I have much wanted the honour of an hour's conversation with you since I read his Historical Memoirs. 'Tis strange any man can intend the reformation of the world, by the most effectual way that can be devised to make it worse. And I think Mr. Jackson but little less imprudent by

corresponding with him in the manner that appears from one or two extracts in the book.

I beg leave to wish you the continuance of all good things, and am, with the utmost respect,

Madam, your most obliged,
and most faithful humble servant,
A. Clarke.

I could not get the inclosed copies better written, but hope you'll not find any material errors in 'em.

The Doctor wrote again to his correspondent at Court in the following month, where great things had been done for the humble poet, in consequence of the interest her Majesty had taken in him and his writings.

THE REV. DR. ALURED CLARKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Winchester, Sept. 19th, 1730.

Madam,

I have had the Thresher with me all this week, and have prepared him as well as I could for her Majesty's bounty. It was with a good deal of caution, and very gradually, that I informed him of what had been done for him, and I thought it best not to let him return to his family till he had taken some time to compose his thoughts. But I had the pleasure of finding my hopes more than answered in the trial; for though he expressed the utmost gratitude, he did not show the least

exultation of spirit by any part of his conduct, and has made as many just reflections on the change of his condition as could have been done by the most experienced sage of them all; and, in truth, I have had so much entertainment in observing the quick relish he has of any sort of useful knowledge, that as little as I love teaching, I should think it the highest employment of my time to spend it in communicating all I could to a mind so well disposed to receive it.

He left me this morning, and, if her Majesty pleases, will be at Windsor in a fortnight, and leave his family to come afterwards, when he is settled and ready to receive them: and I have promised to send to him as soon as I have the honour of your commands on this head. He has promised not to meddle with any of the money that has been gathered for him; and if you approve of it, I should be glad it lay in your hands till I come to town, when I shall have some to add to it, which may be put out upon security for the benefit of his family, or for his own use, if misconduct or any other accident should make it expedient for him to return into Wiltshire. As her Majesty has been so good as to take care that he shall not be sent for abroad without her leave, I would humbly offer something more that may be of consequence to him, which is, that he should not be obliged to make verses upon any particular subject without her Majesty's order; for I am sure, Madam, you will easily imagine the hard-

ship a poor man is under that is not left to follow his own genius and inclination, which must always produce the best compositions; and he has hitherto made no verses that he has shown, except those on poverty, of his own choice; and as it would be a great advantage to him to have some time for storing his mind with as much proper knowledge as he can before he engages in a new work, it is pity he should be diverted from it by every one that has any curiosity to gratify in setting him upon some employment of their own.

I have taken the liberty of advising him to qualify himself in the first place for his business in the garden, and, as he has the advantage of a good understanding, to make himself acquainted with the theory, by reading such books upon the subject as shall be recommended to him, and then he will be sure of a provision for his family if his muse should forsake him. I think he ought to have Chambers's Dictionary, Danet's Dictionary of Antiquities, and Bailey's Etymological Dictionary, or books of the same sort, always by him, which, if you think proper, may be bought out of the money that is collected for him. He has at present so great an aversion to drollery, ridicule, or jingle, and is like to succeed so well in the more manly way, that I hope neither Swift, nor Montaigne, nor South, nor the writers in the Dunciad Controversy, nor even Cowley, will fall into his hands. He has read some of Hudibras,

but with no great relish; for I think he told me he seemed to play the fool too much.

His new employment of gardening, with the subjects he is now upon, together with Shakespeare, and the few books he has with him, will engage him a good while; and if her Majesty will allow me the honour of spending a few hours in her Library at Richmond when I come to town, I will endeavour to pick out the most useful things I can, if he should not in the meantime have the good fortune to meet with better assistance than I can pretend to give him.

I find, upon examination, there are some mistakes in the written accounts of him, which I sent before I had seen him, as there are in the verses, which he will correct when you give him leave. He speaks so well of his wife, that I believe it would give him pain to see so indifferent a character of her in writing.

If you will give me leave to add a word more to what I have said of books, I would propose it to your consideration, whether anything better could be put into his hands than Burnet's Theory of the Earth, and Ray's Wisdom of God in the Creation? The one would let him into new worlds that are yet unknown to him, and so enlarge the number of his ideas; and the other is one of the noblest philosophical romances that ever was wrote, and consequently the properest food to feast a poetical genius with; and they will be very good preparations for such a book as Dr.

Clark's Rohault, which will give him at one view a complete notion of Descartes' System, as well as the principles upon which the present philosophy is established; for, without some general comprehension of these things, he will soon find himself at a great loss for materials, which he will continually be supplying himself with when once such a field is opened to him.

> In all her mazes Nature's face he'll view,
> And as she disappears, he'll still pursue,
> Wrapt in the shades of night the goddess lies,
> Yet to the learn'd unveils her dark disguise,
> But shuns the gross access of vulgar eyes.

Which I think are Dr. Garth's lines. I am ashamed to see what trouble I have given you; but I have conceived such hopes of poor Stephen, and such a hearty affection for him, that I can hardly contain myself within the common rules, and you have given such abundant proof of your zeal to encourage uncommon merit, that I flatter myself you will accept of no apology for an officiousness of this kind. I have taken the liberty of writing my thoughts as they came uppermost, in obedience to you, but beg you will have no other regard to them than as they may serve for hints to form your own judgment upon; for I have read so little poetry of late years, and have in the main so little taste for the compositions that have fallen in my way, that it would be very impertinent in me to pretend to lay down rules for forming a poet.

I wish you all imaginable success in your endeavours to promote the good of mankind, and am, with the utmost regard,

Madam,

your most obliged, most
faithful humble servant,
A. CLARKE.

I have advised him to get Mr. Pope's Essay on Criticism by heart.

The next event which follows is the journey of Stephen to the great capital, ushered in by the good offices of Dr. Clarke and the contributions of the charitable.

DR. ALURED CLARKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Winchester, Oct. 4th, 1730.

MADAM,

I hope the bearer, Stephen Duck, will come safe to you on Wednesday, and I beg leave to assure you, that it is a great concern to me not to be able to deliver him into your hands myself. I spent a week with the Bishop of Salisbury, and when he set out for London returned home on Friday, in order to supply an office here for a time, but was seized with an ague, which has confined me to my house, and will I doubt be troublesome to me in this bad season of the year. Otherwise, it would have been a particular pleasure to have waited upon you in your country retirement.

I think myself very happy in the approbation of my thoughts in relation to poor Stephen, who will bring you a specimen of his gratitude in the way of pastoral, which he never tried before, and are, I think, very well for the first attempt. I have received three letters from Dr. Lockyer, who is at Sherburn, to send him to my Lord Macclesfield, who (the Dean said in his second letter) had *her Majesty's leave to take care of him for some time;* and in the last letter, which came on Friday, he says, "My Lord looked upon himself as absolutely intrusted by her Majesty with the care of preparing him, and of sending him to Court," and "that my Lord hoped he would make haste to Sherburn, lest he should be accused for neglecting to send for him." To the two first letters I answered to this effect, that I waited for orders from Court, and therefore could not tell whether I should be at liberty to send him or not; and to the last, that I had actually received those orders, and should accordingly discharge myself of my trust to-morrow morning, but that I would acquaint you with what had passed between us. I make no excuse for being thus particular, because it may probably fall in with some of those reasons you had for seeing him at Sundon *first*.

I have told him he is to be wholly under your direction, as you will observe in the conclusion of his pastoral, and am more strongly convinced of the necessity of his being under your care, that her Majesty may be freed from any troublesome

solicitations about him, and be out of the way of the epigrammatic Mæcenas's of the age; and therefore I think it the highest instance of her Majesty's goodness and regard to him not to permit him to Court.

I believe, Madam, you will think it proper not to suffer any copies of his future poetry to go out of your hands, considering the ill use that has been made already by the publication of his verses in a surreptitious manner. And I have inclosed an advertisement to send to the bookseller, or not, as you think proper; the design of it being only to acquaint the world that he knew nothing of the publication, and not to oblige him to appear in print the sooner for it. I leave him to acquaint you with what has passed between him and Lady Hartford. I have collected between twenty and thirty guineas for him at Winchester. What I think of more, I will beg leave to trouble you with by the post, being at present so much out of order, that I can only add my repeated sense of the obligations I have to you, and that I shall always remain with the highest attachment,

Madam,

Your most devoted
and faithful servant,

A. Clarke.

Dr. Clarke's precautions, with respect to Pope, show that a man is far more likely to receive com-

pliments, on some occasions, from fear than love. He thus writes to Mrs. Clayton :—

Madam,

Please to deliver the inclosed to Stephen, or burn it, as you think proper. I am not fond of paying compliments to Mr. Pope; I think he deserves them not from anybody that has a true love for the Royal Family. However, as Stephen is to be his neighbour, and the friendship and assistance of Mr. Pope would be very serviceable to him, or, at least, it would be prudent not to expose him to the malice of the Dunciad Club, which perhaps might be the case if some little court be not paid — I believe, on these considerations, you will think there can be no harm in his carrying my letter, in which I have avoided anything that might look like a recommendation of him in her Majesty's name, which is an honour I cannot think Mr. Pope has any claim to. It is a thousand pities that the author of Windsor Forest and the Essay on Criticism should have soiled his genius so much as he has done of late years with Swift, &c.; I have also inclosed a letter from the Professor of Poetry at Oxford, with a collection of Plays, of which you will please to make some choice for Stephen.

The worthy Doctor and Mrs. Clayton appeared to have felt as much anxiety with regard to Stephen Duck's education as if he had been their favourite child.

DR. ALURED CLARKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Winchester, Oct. 8th, 1730.

MADAM,

I am quite ashamed to set pen to paper after I have given you so much trouble about poor Stephen, but having mentioned the inclosed in my last, and finding it left behind, I think myself obliged to send it while Stephen is with you. I understand by Mr. Spence, that these plays are bound up in volumes, as they are figured in his paper, and to be had separately, though 'tis probable all that will be of use to him are in her Majesty's Library. I should be afraid of his meddling with anything of Lee's, and have therefore crossed the ninth volume; and as to the eleventh, I should think Steele's plays would do better by themselves, for I can have no notion of his reading the Rehearsal, or having any relish for the finest wit in the world that is bestowed upon dramatic performances, having never read enough of them to know anything of their rules. And as to Shakespeare, one would not confine him to three volumes, but may venture him through every line, being very well satisfied that Stephen will suck the flowers, and leave all the puns and low conceits behind him. I cannot meet with any satisfaction about a translation of Homer, and therefore I believe he must read Mr. Pope's at his most leisure times. He will meet with great variety of entertainment, as well as instruction, in the account of

Homer's Life, and in the notes, however the work itself may fall short of what he has conceived of the old Grecian.

My bookseller sent me word last night, that Erasmus Jones, who gathers news for the London Evening Post, is the publisher of Stephen's poetry, and though it may not be worth while to prosecute him for his dishonesty, I think he should be obliged to make Stephen some acknowledgment; and if this agrees with your judgment, I will engage a friend to see what can be done in it.

And now, Madam, all that I shall trouble you further with on this subject is, that you will make me very happy in letting me know your sentiments of our poet now you have seen him, when your leisure permits; for I should be very glad to hear that he answers your expectations as much as he has done ours in these parts.

I thank God I am much better, though still confined at home. I am always,

Madam, your most obliged,
faithful humble servant,
A. Clarke.

At this time, a very lamentable domestic incident took place, in the illness and decease of Stephen's wife.

DR. ALURED CLARKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Winchester, Oct. 15th, 1730.

MADAM,

I received the inclosed account of the death of Stephen's wife, this morning, and I supposed (by the name) it comes from the young farmer with whom she used to read; and I have just had an accidental opportunity of answering it by a countryman, who promised to deliver it into Mr. Lavinton's own hand. I told him I could not say with any certainty where Stephen was at present, and that I believed he could hardly get to Charlton again this fortnight; and did not doubt of his care in doing everything that was proper for the children till Stephen came. I beg leave to inclose a letter to him, which I have sent open, that you may be satisfied of my not having mentioned anything to him of his misfortune; because I could not be sure you would think it proper to deject him with such ill news before her Majesty had seen him, for which, in my letter to Mr. Lavinton, I thought it best to set his return home at some little distance of time. I suppose this alteration in his family will incline him to send his children to some friend in the country where they are, till they are grown up, rather than bring them into a more expensive place.

Whenever you think proper to send him, I believe it will be a great ease to him to receive orders from you not to go to any place he shall

be invited to during the time he has leave to be absent from Kew. And I beg leave to assure you, Madam, that I should not be so impertinent as to interpose my advice, if I had not particular reasons, which, I am persuaded, you would be satisfied with if I could trouble you with them by letter. His two letters, which came to me both together, last night, are full of your goodness to him; and I am so well pleased with one expression, that I cannot help transcribing it:

"I have no reason to believe that the good lady will cease to be my friend, till I cease to be an honest man."

I had a letter from the Bishop of Sarum last night, in which he speaks with concern of the irregular publication of Stephen's verses, which, he hears, has been already worth 100*l.* to the printer. He proposes the printing a genuine copy by subscription, accompanied with a short life of the author, &c. I should hope the sale of the spurious copy was pretty well over, and that he would not suffer much by deferring to publish till another year, which may give him time to make considerable alterations in what he has done, as well as additions of more pieces. But whenever you think it proper to be done, I believe you will also think it right to give the public a favourable opinion of the author as well as his writings. And if I had had foresight enough I could early have taken minutes of the several letters I have wrote you upon the subject, from

which I could have filled a sheet of paper, that would have answered the purpose in some measure. I have inclosed a bill for the money I have received for Stephen here, which you will please to send, if you should intend to make any use of his money before I have the honour of waiting on you. I suppose, by his letter, it will not be long before he is fixed at Kew, if he be not there by this time.

I am sensible it is high time to release you, without saying more than that I am, with the utmost regard,

Madam,

Your most devoted obliged servant,

A. CLARKE.

The former part of my letter to Stephen is occasioned by a circumstance which I will acquaint you with when I wait upon you.

Such was the effect of courtly patronage, and such the profits accruing to booksellers from poetry, in those days.

The poor Thresher, it appears, fulfilled satisfactorily the wishes of his reverend friend.

DR. ALURED CLARKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Winchester, Oct. 25th, 1730.

MADAM,

You have made me very happy by your obliging letter, and the satisfaction I have in not

having raised any expectations of Stephen but what he has hitherto answered.

By some expressions that fell from him here, I was apprehensive he would be very much affected by the death of his wife, for he was very solicitous about the long journey she was to take, and had resolved to ask her Majesty's leave to return home in order to bear her company to Kew, that she might be under no fears on the road. I hope he has by this time recovered his temper. I do not know but we may promise ourselves one of his best strains of poetry on this occasion, from the natural and constant correspondence there is between the mind and the affections.

Jones, the publisher, had advertised against Stephen's own advertisement, on which my brother has made him recant in three several papers, and acknowledge his edition of the poems to be spurious, and beg pardon of Mr. Duck and the public, and has withal got five guineas of him for Stephen; for it seems Jones is very poor, and got but little for the copy of Roberts, who printed it, as he thought, from a genuine copy, and has promised that no more editions shall be published. But it seems there is another copy pirated from the spurious one. Upon the whole, we could not do better for him, considering there is no *effectual* way of coming at such people by law.

If Stephen had made Winchester in his way, I believe I should have troubled you with a larger

letter by him. I assure you, Madam, I have the fullest sense of the kind manner in which you treat me; nor can anything make me more than I am,

Madam, your most obliged
and devoted servant,
A. CLARKE.

Her Majesty was so pleased with the Thresher, that she not only settled a small sum annually upon him, but, in 1733, made him one of the Yeomen of the Guard; and was the means, by her condescension and interest, of advancing the sale of his works, so that he derived considerable pecuniary advantage from his literary efforts.

He did not, however, escape those "epigrammatic Mæcenases" dreaded by Dr. Clarke. His good fortune excited the envy and jealousy of less successful writers, and the Dean of St. Patrick's did not spare the poet. Swift's epigram upon poor Stephen is certainly, like many other of his compositions, more true than kind.

"The Thresher Duck could o'er the Queen prevail;
The proverb says, 'no fence against a flail.'
From threshing corn, he turns to threshing brains,
For which her majesty allows him grains.
Though 'tis confessed, that those who ever saw
His poems, think them all not worth a straw.
Thrice happy Duck, employed in threshing stubble,
Thy toil is lessened and thy profits double."

From being a common husbandman, Duck had now become a Yeoman of the Guard. A still greater change was to take place in his situation. He studied for the Church; at which of the Universities, if, indeed, at either, we know not. Certain it is, however, that either in the year 1746 or 1749, he was ordained; and was afterwards appointed keeper of the Queen's select library at Richmond, with apartments allotted to him, which, long after his death, were inhabited by his surviving daughter. He was then appointed preacher at Kew; was next preferred to the Rectory of Byfleet, in Surrey, and in four or five years afterwards put an end to his apparently prosperous career, by drowning himself, near Reading, during a fit of temporary insanity.

It is said that Stephen Duck was not happy; and it was indeed a hazardous experiment to raise him so completely from his original sphere, and to place him in a situation for which his early education and habits had not fitted him.

Those dearly-bought books, the sources of his early culture, were perhaps more prized and valued by him, and the hardly-obtained hours of study happier moments to him, and productive of keener enjoyment, than any that Duck subsequently experienced. A sense of inferiority and ignorance

is galling to those who aspire to knowledge; and that sense he must have felt, when, mixing in the world, he found himself matched with the polite and the educated. There was not power or strength enough in the genius of this unfortunate man to make up for his defective education. Conscious of this, and yet rating his abilities too high, the disappointment at finding that he fell short of his own expectations, together with several other slight circumstances, occasioned a dejection of spirits which produced so fatal and mournful a termination.

The Rev. Joseph Spence, Prebendary of Durham, wrote an account of the "Thresher" in 1730, which was subsequently prefixed to an edition of his poems, and may also be seen in "The Gentleman's Magazine for 1736."

CHAPTER IX.

Dr. Alured Clarke applies to Mrs. Clayton respecting his claims to a vacant Prebend in Westminster—Different competitors for this preferment—Dreadful calamity at Blandford—Dr. Clarke goes to Court to kiss their Majesties' hands—Lord John Russell—Lord Lymington—His obligations to Mrs. Clayton—His loyalty to the reigning family—His steady support of the Duke of Newcastle—His Grace's unsatisfactory conduct—Lord Lymington's desire to be employed by the King—Mrs. Clayton's political influence.

CHAPTER IX.

Mrs. Clayton's influence appears to have been all-powerful in every direction; as we may conclude by the following explanation of her correspondent.

THE REV. DR. ALURED CLARKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Winchester, June 18, 1731.

Honoured Madam,

By a letter which I received from the Bishop of Salisbury last post, I find I ought not to omit the first opportunity of saying something for myself. When I waited upon you at Kew, I had been informed by very good authority, that the Bishop of London said the prebend of Westminster would be given to me or my brother, and therefore did not think it right to make use of your friendship in an affair which so nearly concerned my brother, and which I made no doubt he would succeed in, by the Bishop of London's assistance. But the next day (Saturday), I met

the new Dean of Westminster (Bishop Wilcox*), at Bishop Sydal's,† who informed me that he had been asked at Court whether he had any objections to my being brought into his church? He was pleased to say that he could make none, but as he had been concerned in delivering a letter to her Majesty in behalf of my brother, he thought himself obliged to act for him as much as he could, though by what he could learn, he judged me in a fairer way to succeed.

I assured him that I was an absolute stranger to anything that might have been done in my favour with relation to this preferment; and though it was more desirable and more suitable to my situation than anything else I could reasonably have in view, I would certainly do nothing to prejudice my brother's interest, by any particular application at this juncture.

After this he added, that the Duke of Newcastle was very earnest in recommending his chaplain, Mr. Barnard, and said he hoped he would be acceptable to him, so that the Bishop upon the whole thought the competition would more probably fall between Mr. Barnard and me, and desired I would call upon him before I left the town, which I did on Monday; when he told me

* Dr. Joseph Wilcocks, Bishop of Rochester. He died in 1756, and was succeeded in both his deanery and bishoprick by Dr. Zachary Pearce.

† Dr. Elias Sydal, Bishop of St. David's, and subsequently of Gloucester. He died in 1734.

he had seen some of the great men who had promised not to put any person into his church that should be disagreeable to him; that the Duke of Newcastle was very zealous for Mr. Barnard, but he heard Sir Robert Walpole was inclinable to serve me, and therefore believed Mr. Barnard or I should have it. My brother was with me this time at the Bishop's, and told me afterwards that the Bishop of London had promised to do him what service he could, but that he had no great hopes of success.

This, Madam, is the whole of what passed after I had the honour of waiting on you at Kew, and I have chosen rather to be tedious than not particular enough, that you may do what you think proper in the matter. When I was with the Bishop of Salisbury, I told him, that if I had known these circumstances, I should have been very desirous (supposing my brother out of the question) of a preferment which is attended with no difficulty or inconvenience, and would set me quite at ease with regard to any future views in life. But as it is possible my brother may still have a better chance than I imagine, and things may not stand as they have been represented to me, I could not prevail upon myself to repeat the trouble I had given you, especially after the assurances you had given me of her Majesty's kind intention to provide for me.

I hope you will be so good as to excuse the manner in which I write upon this occasion, for

when anything lies puzzled in one's head, it is impossible it should come out right upon paper. And as it is with me a very nice case, I am sure you can feel for me, and excuse the perplexity I am under. I hope you continue to enjoy your health, and am in the most sincere and earnest manner,

Madam, your ever obliged and
devoted humble servant,
A. CLARKE.

Mr. Barnard has already had the Chaplainship of Chelsea Hospital from the Government, and was made Chaplain to his Majesty within these two years, I think.

DR. ALURED CLARKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Lincoln's Inn, July 1st, 1731.

HONOURED MADAM,

I set out from Winchester on Monday, and have been twice at Hampton Court to finish the ceremony of kissing the hands of the Royal Family. The King and Queen were pleased to receive me in a very kind manner. I have also followed your directions, in waiting upon Sir Robert Walpole, to thank him for the favours which I told him you had been so good as to acquaint me with in his name. These things, and the necessary compliments that were to be made to the new Dean of Westminster, have so engrossed the little time I have yet had in London,

that I hardly know whereabouts I am; but am sure you will be so good as to excuse any manner of writing in these circumstances, because I could not deny myself the pleasure of writing by the first post to one that has been, in two of the most critical circumstances of my life, a sort of guardian angel to me.

Please to assure yourself, that however I may fail of your expectation in other points, I shall never be wanting in every instance of gratitude that can possibly be shown by

Most honoured Madam,

Your ever obliged
and devoted humble servant,
A. Clarke.

I did not get from Hampton Court till past nine this evening. I hope to see my friend* Stephen, the beginning of the week. If Mr. Clayton be at Sundon, I beg my humble service to him.

DR. ALURED CLARKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Lincoln's Inn, July 20, 1731.

Most honoured Madam,

I can hardly say whether I had more pleasure in waiting upon you, or more concern when I was obliged to take my leave of you; and as both are owing to the same cause, I think it must needs be so with every one that has the honour of your friendship. I don't know that I ever

* Stephen Duck.

proposed more happiness to myself in theory than I actually enjoyed at Sundon, and if it ever makes me troublesome in your retirement, you must treat me in another manner before I shall be able to perceive it; and as I think myself incapable of saying what I don't mean to so excellent a friend, I should esteem it a peculiar happiness to be able to convince you of my gratitude in a much stronger manner than can possibly be effected by the best expressions, either in number or weight.

I have sent the letters as directed, and will find out Mr. B—* to-morrow, if he be in town. Sir Robert's absence occasions so much silence in the political world, that I don't hear of the least buz or whisper of public matters.

When I get home I will do myself the pleasure of writing to you. In the mean time, I beg my humble service and thanks to Mr. Clayton for the obliging manner in which he was pleased to treat me at Sundon, and am, with the utmost sincerity and zeal,

Most honoured Madam,
Your most obliged,
most devoted, humble servant,
A. Clarke.

A passage in one of Doctor Clarke's letters to Mrs. Clayton alludes to a terrible catastrophe that plunged many families in ruin:—

* Apparently Mr. Barnard.

"The mayor of this city carried about 150*l.* that was collected here for the poor sufferers at Blandford, and brought back a very melancholy account of the place, which lies in ruins. Great numbers that are sick of the small-pox are laid in a very indifferent manner under sheds in the fields, and as they are stripped of all conveniences, they are every day fresh supplied with beer and provisions ready dressed from the neighbouring villages; seventeen dead bodies were found in the ruins. Every body is pleased with his Majesty's bounty on this occasion, and all his friends are the more so, because they are sure that no expense can turn to better account, or more endear a prince to his people. The magistrate of the town has published a very judicious advertisement, signifying that the sufferers have all resolved not to stroll about the country for charity, or beg money in an illegal way; that who shall do it in any part of the kingdom may be treated as an impostor."

DR. ALURED CLARKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Winchester, July 30, 1731.

MOST HONOURED MADAM,

Though I am sensible it would be very unreasonable to take up any part of your time, of which you have so little yourself, in writing letters, I cannot help soliciting one line, and no more, to assure me of your health, which you have given me such an interest in, that I find it every day

the growing concern of my mind, which I say now with the more freedom because you've made me so happy that I flatter myself I shall easily be believed. I delivered the message to Mr. B—, who was very much pleased and very thankful, and will desire leave to wait on you as soon as he hears of your return, till when he does not think it proper to move a step farther. And last night he supped with me here, and drank your health, being on a journey westward. And I waited upon Mr. W—* and acquainted him that I had given you his letter, which you would have answered by me if it had been necessary. Though I stayed but one day in town, I went to visit Dr. Friend, that I might lose no opportunity of carrying on what you had so kindly begun between us, for I am very sincere in assuring you that I am so well convinced of your judgment as your friendship, that I don't know how to contrive a happiness for myself that will do me more good than in being directed by you in everything that can be of consequence to me.

Hearing that Lord John Russell† is come home, I have wrote to him to-day to invite him to my

* Probably the new Dean of Westminster, Wilcocks.

† John, afterwards fourth Duke of Bedford, appointed, in 1756, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. This nobleman was the object of Junius's bitter attacks. He married, first, Diana, youngest daughter of Charles, Earl of Sunderland, and granddaughter of the Duke of Marlborough; secondly, Gertrude, eldest daughter of Earl Gower.

house, when he comes to visit his estate in this neighbourhood, but not having known much of him these two or three years, and being very sensible of the short turns that are made by young men at his time of life, I promise myself nothing from it, nor can lose anything but a letter by it. I hope to be at liberty in a week or two, to make the Bishop of Salisbury a visit.

I shall be glad to know when you return to London, that I may direct my letters accordingly. And as to the last affair you was so good as to talk over with me, I will take particular care to observe your directions, and will acquaint you at large with the result of it at a proper opportunity. I suppose good Mr. Clayton has been obliged to leave Sundon before this time. My humble service attends the ladies. All prosperity be with you.

I am, most honoured Madam,
Your ever obliged,
devoted humble servant,
A. Clarke.

The following letter relates to John Wallop, Baron Wallop and Viscount Lymington. This nobleman's eldest son married Catherine Conduit, heiress of John Conduit, Esq., and niece of Sir Isaac Newton, whose papers his Lordship committed to the care of Dr. Horsley, for the purpose of drawing up a biography of that distinguished

philosopher. The expressions used by Dr. Clarke give a pleasing idea of Lord Lymington's character:—

DR. ALURED CLARKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Hursburne, Aug. 7th, 1731.

Most Honoured Madam,

Lord Lymington thinks himself extremely obliged to you for the kind and generous part you are willing to take in order to serve him, and has given me leave to explain his sentiments at large to you, with the same freedom and confidence he would use towards his best friend. He has constantly endeavoured to promote his Majesty's service in this county with the same zeal as if he had been more immediately employed to do it, and has never directly or indirectly entered into any measures that have been opposite to the designs of the administration, but has all along condemned the proceedings of these gentlemen who endeavour to work themselves into power by opposing every step that is taken for the public service. Accordingly, he has frequently declared these sentiments where it was proper; and his sense of things has been so well understood, that nobody has thought it advisable to propose any schemes of opposition to him. And though he has seldom been in London, for reasons of near consequence to himself and family, he has always expressed a readiness to

give his attendance whenever the honour or interest of the Royal Family should be concerned.

Upon these principles he has acted so inflexibly, that nothing can divert him from the interest of that noble person with whom his Majesty has thought proper to intrust the care of the country.* But though the weight of the government power here is in itself great, and the natural strength of the Whig interest far superior to any other, yet, for want of a proper degree of confidence in the Duke, things have been brought into so much uncertainty of late, that it has been thought necessary my Lord should separate himself from the Duke, that the common interest might be preserved from sinking into the hands of the Tories. Notwithstanding this, he has declined all offers of the kind, and has run a very great hazard of losing a part of a large family interest, (which has been considerably increased since he came to his estate,) in order to preserve the influence of the Government in the Duke's hands, which my Lord will continue to do as long as it is possible to keep the gentlemen together, and in a disposition to act with him.

And I think it may be proper to add, (what is pretty uncommon,) that he has disregarded many jealousies which the Duke has entertained of his having a design to set up himself at the head of the county; as also many reports to his disadvantage in a place where he always desires to be seen in a true light, and has still acted with the

* The Duke of Newcastle.

same zeal as he could have done for his own private interest, having ever had the warmest attachment to his Majesty's service, which he is persuaded is inseparable from the happiness of the kingdom.

I have been the more particular, because I know my Lord thinks himself immediately concerned to do himself justice on this head, and despises every other consideration in comparison of his Majesty's favourable opinion of his conduct, which he would studiously endeavour to deserve upon all occasions. Upon this bottom, he has always thought it his duty to serve the King, whenever he shall be called for to it, in a way that is consistent with his own honour and his Majesty's interest. For as he has hitherto avoided all appearance of private views, he would, by no means, be the occasion of removing the Duke from his posts, notwithstanding the reason he lately had (in an affair of no consequence to the public) to make him sensible of his misconduct. On the other hand, whenever his Majesty shall do my Lord the honour of employing him, he will use all his endeavours for preserving the peace of the county, re-establishing the public interest; and if he should find it impracticable to do so, he would be the first that should desire to have the power removed into other hands, as no temptation has ever yet induced him to think of an office which he would not discharge in the best manner he was able.

When I had the honour of talking with you on

this subject, I told you I apprehended that my Lord would be unwilling to be employed in any way without his Majesty's personal command; and that as he had great acquaintance with the ministers, and was under no particular obligation to them, he would not care to lay himself under new engagements to any but his Sovereign, by whom (I was confident) he would always think it his honour to be bound in gratitude as well as duty; and that this resolution proceeded from no personal pique or resentment, having always lived with Sir Robert on easy terms, and persuaded himself that Sir Robert was in the same sentiments with regard to him. What I then said to you upon my own judgment, my Lord gives me leave to repeat, and confirm in his own name, as his clear and constant sense, and consistent with every other part of his conduct, so that there can be no reasonable apprehension of any inconvenience to the King's measures from one who has constantly promoted them in his present situation, and advised the most healing methods of uniting the friends of the government upon all occasions; and as he never had the least solicitude for being removed out of his present way of life, I am persuaded he will be as well pleased with it till the public service shall make it expedient for him to change it.

My Lord is satisfied you will agree with him, that this affair ought to remain an absolute secret in all its parts, for the sake of the common in-

terest, which might suffer in this county in case no change should be made, and it should be thought best to let things go on in the present channel. He desires you would accept of his sincerest acknowledgments of your favour; and I have only to assure you farther, that I am not conscious of having said one thing which I do not believe to be strictly true, and not merely in the way wherein men are apt to express themselves too much at large.

I am with the utmost regard,

Madam,

Your most obliged

and most humble servant,

A. CLARKE.

Thus, even the appointment of the ministry was left to female hands. Well might Sir Robert Walpole pay court to the Queen, and oblige, by every possible accession, her favourite. The letters which were addressed to Mrs. Clayton were, in fact, addressed to the Queen, for whose perusal they were intended.

The nobleman thus strongly recommended, obtained the notice he sought. His services ultimately received their reward; for in April, 1743, he was raised to the dignity of Earl of Portsmouth.

CHAPTER X.

Mary Howe, Countess of Pembroke—Lady Deloraine and Lady Archibald Hamilton—A curious remedy—A row at the Opera—The Royal Family and Signora Cuzzoni—Mrs. Howard, in her new office as Mistress of the Robes—Dr. Wigan and the Royal Society—The Countess of Pembroke's disappointment—A misadventure returning from Bubb Doddington's—A letter full of gossip—A present, not a bribe—Royal marriages—Lady Pembroke obtains her wish—Court gossip—Choosing a Princess's attendant—Extraordinary habits of a Court lady—Lady Suffolk quits the Court, and Lady Pembroke desires to succeed her.

CHAPTER X.

Among all the numerous female correspondents of the Queen's friend, one of the most voluminous was the lady whose communications are to be found in the present chapter. She was Mary Howe, the sister of Scroop, Viscount Howe, and the third wife of Thomas, eighth Earl of Pembroke, who, after filling several important offices in the State, during the reigns of Queen Anne, and of George the First, died in January, 1732-3. She subsequently married a Mr. Mordaunt, who held an appointment at Court. Many of her letters are unfortunately not dated, an omission very common with her sex, but they are here arranged in the order in which they were written. Lady Pembroke was intimately acquainted with what was going on at Court, having filled more

than one office there; and she appears not to have neglected any occasion of forwarding intelligence to her powerful friend, that she thinks may be worthy of Mrs. Clayton's notice. In the first of this series the Lady Deloraine, mentioned by her, was, we have reason to believe, Mary, daughter of Philip Howard, a younger son of Thomas, first Earl of Berkshire, and second wife of Henry, created by Queen Anne Earl of Deloraine, Viscount Hermitage, and Baron Scott of Goldielands, who died on the twenty-fifth of December, 1730, in his fifty-fifth year. The Lady Archibald, also alluded to, was the celebrated Lady Archibald Hamilton, the mistress of Frederick Prince of Wales. The subject of the letter is a vacancy which these ladies were desirous of filling.

THE COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Dear Madam,

Yesterday a servant of Lady Deloraine's brought these two inclosed letters; one of them, not being directed, I guess was for you, and therefore did not open it. I believe by her letter to me, which surprises me very much, my Lord Deloraine did not know of what passed last Decem-

ber, for if he had, she never could have produced reasons which are equally good against both. I am sorry for her, for I believe she has a mind to it, and it would certainly be a great advantage to her. I answered her letter yesterday, and said the Queen knew nothing of it. I have thought of another since, who would be very happy with it, and that is Lady Archibald Hamilton; but when I have the happiness of seeing you at Kew, this day se'nnight, I shall know yours, which is so valuable an advantage to any one, that it is a rule with me to treasure up every word you say; and it is a strange thing, but a true one, that singly in one person should centre all the good and great virtues and qualifications which make life desirable, and that are scattered single to all the rest of the world, and to people that make a figure with one of your thousands. I am afraid I can stay but a moment next Monday, but that moment is invaluable to me that am, with the sincerest truth, admiration, and esteem,

Dear Madam,

Most faithfully yours,

M. Pembroke.

Monday morning.—At Aldered, Windsor, since Saturday.

COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Wilton, Oct. 21st.

I am very much concerned to read in one of the papers of to-day that her Majesty has been ill; but hearing no other account, I flatter myself it has not been so; and if you would have the goodness to confirm my own wishes, I should be very happy. My Lord and self desire you will be so good to present our most humble duties to her Majesty, and hope she will be so gracious as to pardon my not paying my duty to her on the King's birth-day. My Lord has not yet done taking the bark, and has not been down stairs since his illness, which makes him not care to think of a journey at his first going out. He has indeed been very ill, and what with seeing him so, watching with him, being obliged to make use of a physician from Salisbury, I knew nothing of joy, and having the fever at the same time myself, has brought such a lowness of spirits upon me that I shall feel for some time; the doctor here makes me eat a great deal and drink wine, which I believe will do me good, but this is very unreasonable, when I am giving you, dear Madam, so much trouble to entertain you with a long detail of sickness; though there is one health more that so nearly concerns me, I cannot help inquiring after, which is your own. I hope that is settled in a perfect good state, and that you have entirely recovered

your spirits, and have not had one moment's complaint since I saw you. My Lord desires his compliments to you. I am, with the sincerest friendship and esteem,

Dear Madam,
Your most affectionate
humble servant,
M. Pembroke.

The following contains a curious illustration of the times, in its reference to the commotion which occurred at the Italian Opera, when the Princess Amelia happened to be present. The object of public disapprobation was Signora Cuzzoni; but that favourite singer having a powerful body of friends in the house, a struggle took place between the two parties, which caused the greater part of the performance to be in "inexplicable dumb show." This letter affords a curious instance of the participation of the most illustrious personages of the realm in the cabals of the Italian Opera, which had not then been introduced more than half a century into England.

COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Dear Madam,

I hope you will forgive the trouble I am going to give you, having always found you on every occasion most obliging. What I have to

desire is, that if you find a convenient opportunity, I wish you would be so good as to tell her Royal Highness, that every one who wishes well to Cuzzoni is in the utmost concern for what happened last Tuesday at the Opera, in the Princess Amelia's presence; but to show their innocence of the disrespect which was shown to her Highness, I beg you will do them the justice to say, that the Cuzzoni had been publicly told, to complete her disgrace, she was to be hissed off the stage on Tuesday; she was in such concern at this, that she had a great mind not to sing, but I, without knowing anything that the Princess Amelia would honour the Opera with her presence, positively ordered her not to quit the stage, but let them do what they would: though not heard, to sing on, and not to go off till it was proper; and she owns now that if she had not had that order she would have quitted the stage when they cat-called her to such a degree in one song, that she was not heard one note, which provoked the people that like her so much, that they were not able to get the better of their resentment, but would not suffer the Faustina to speak afterwards. I hope her Royal Highness would not disapprove of any one preventing the Cuzzoni's being hissed off the stage; but I am in great concern they did not suffer anything to have happened to her, rather than to have failed in the high respect every one ought to pay to a Princess of her Royal Highness's family; but as they were

not the aggressors, I hope that may in some measure excuse them.

Another thing I beg you would say is, that I, having happened to say that the Directors would have a message from the King, and that her Royal Highness had told me that his Majesty had said to her, that if they dismissed Cuzzoni they should not have the honour of his presence, or what he was pleased to allow them, some of the Directors have thought fit to say that they neither should have a message from the King, and that he did not say what her Royal Highness did me the honour to tell me he did. I most humbly ask her Royal Highness's pardon for desiring the Duke of Rutland (who is one of the chief amongst them for Cuzzoni) to do himself the honour to speak of it to her Royal Highness, and hear what she would be so gracious to tell him. They have had also a message from the King, in a letter from Mr. Fabrice, which they have the insolence to dispute, except the Duke of Rutland, Lord Albemarle, and Sir Thomas Pendergrass. Lady Walsingham having desired me to let her know how this affair went, I have written to her this morning, and, at the Duke of Rutland's desire, have sent an account of what was done at the Board, for her to give his Majesty.

As I have interested myself for this poor woman, so I will not leave anything undone that may justify her; and if you will have the goodness to state this affair to her Royal Highness, whom I

hope will still continue her most gracious protection to her, I shall be most extremely obliged to you, that am,

Dear Madam,
With the most sincere friendship,
Your most affectionate
humble servant,
M. PEMBROKE.

Sir William Morrice having the small pox, keeps us in town some days longer.

The ensuing communication conveys the intelligence of the honour conferred upon Mrs. Clayton's rival at Court, and as well as for other little matters of gossip, well deserves perusal.

COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

July 1st.

There have been so many different reports, and not being well enough to go myself, I could not before have the pleasure of telling you, dear Madam, that Mrs. Howard is Mistress of the Robes, with 400*l.* a-year. It is very likely you know this already, but I could not deny myself the privilege you gave me of having this happiness, which I esteem a very great one, since I am deprived of any other way's enjoying a conversation so valuable and so delightful, and so much coveted as yours is by all the sensible world.

Mrs. Howard, I heard, offered to dress the Queen's head the first day after, who would not give her leave. She is to live in the house, as she used to do. Lord Suffolk left everything he had to her, and the Duke of Argyle and Lord Ilay, trustees. But I hear it amounts to a very small matter, two or three thousand pounds at most. I always had understood that the Duchess of Dorset really was, and had the place of Mistress of the Robes. You will be surprised, Madam, when I tell you, that I have had a visit of nearly three hours from the Dowager Duchess of Marlborough, with great compliments and proffers of friendship. I shall have the honour of telling you all when we next meet. Lady Lynne is in great affliction; her youngest son being dead, and her eldest given over. I am afraid it will hurt her health very much. I have not been at Hampton Court since I saw you, but hope to go in three or four days, where, if you will honour me, dear Madam, with any commands, to the best of my power they shall be obeyed faithfully, that, with the sincerest gratitude and respect, must ever acknowledge myself,

Your most obedient
and obliged humble servant,
M. Pembroke.

The Queen, or Mrs. Clayton, seems to have been anxious for the admission of Dr. Wigan, one of the Court physicians, into the Royal Society. The Doctor was the editor of that edition

of Aretæus which was printed at the Clarendon Press in 1723.

COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

London, August 9th.

It is so great a pleasure, dear Madam, to receive any commands from you, that I cannot express how much I am obliged to you, both for hearing of your health, and for flattering me that though but in a trifle I can be any ways serviceable to any one that you wish well to. I acquainted my Lord as soon as I received your letter, and he desired his humble service to you, and that he had been very much solicited in this affair, which he had absolutely refused to meddle in, not having concerned himself these thirty years in any belonging to the Royal Society, nor would have done now, without your commands; that he will do Dr. Wigan all the service that lies in his power; that he hopes he has made interest some time; for others have this five weeks. But he hopes Dr. Wigan is as likely as any to succeed, and that he may depend on everything he can do to serve him. And give me leave, dear Madam, to add that, if it is possible for me to serve him, I shall not neglect soliciting Dr. Mead, or any one that comes in my way that I think can help this affair.

It is surely impossible that this letter can go without repeating (what I glory in, and what gratitude directs me to say) the sense I have

of your excessive goodness for me, and that as long as I have a being in this world, I shall be incessantly wishing it may be in my power to make you some return, and that your happiness may be equal to your merit.

I am, dear Madam,
most sincerely and faithfully yours,
M. Pembroke.

My Lord thinks of going into Nottinghamshire, but our day is not yet fixed, he having business that detains him here.

It seems that the Countess was disappointed in her desire of becoming permanently attached to the Court. The misadventure she afterwards relates, took place in returning from a visit to the seat of the celebrated Bubb Doddington.

COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

I am so very much obliged to you, dear Madam, that I am at a loss to express how sensible I am of your goodness to me. I hope you received last post, a letter for her Royal Highness, and I had not then time to write scarce a line to you. I am extremely satisfied with the Princess's letter, but at the same time, cannot help wishing she had this time thought me worthy of serving her. But since it cannot be, I live in hopes that some time or other I shall have the honour of

being near her, and often with you. You are too good to mention our meeting next winter; that always must be more desired by me than yourself—at least, in justice ought to be. The public prints say the Duchess of St. Albans is Lady of the Bedchamber, but I have heard so from no other letters; I should think, rather, Lady Ashburnham, but have no more than my own opinion for it.

I wish any (for me) happy fortune could bring you this way, and flatter myself you would not forget Wilton, if you were near it. I have been a very great rambler lately. At Mr. Doddington's I was wet to the skin while walking in his garden, and was overturned coming home, but fortunately so much against a bank, that we were none of us hurt with the fall. The weather here is so indifferent, that some days we cannot go out of the house. I hope you have pleasanter in Bedfordshire. Mr. and Mrs. Page, with my brother and sister Howe, I expect in a very few days, which will be extremely agreeable to me. I should be very much pleased to have a line or two from you when an idle half hour comes in your way, and beg you would believe that I am truly sensible of your favours, and shall, to the utmost of my power be, with most sincere gratitude and esteem,

Your most faithful,
humble servant,
M. Pembroke.

In the following letter—the Court ladies, Mrs. Howard and Mrs. Brudenell, the King, the Printer

of the "Craftsman,"—Pulteney's paper in opposition to Sir Robert Walpole and his government,—and Lady Archibald Hamilton, figure, in turn.

COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

DEAR MADAM,

I am afraid you will think me very troublesome; but your asking if I heard anything of Mrs. Howard's place occasions it, for I was a good deal surprised to hear, last Sunday, from a friend of Mrs. Brudenell's, that she was to kiss the Queen's hand that day. I asked who spoke for her, and was answered, her husband had a great mind to it, and had asked for it himself. I confess I did not before believe the report, that it was to be, as thinking nothing less likely. The King talks positively of going to York, as I hear, which, if he does in two days, I am afraid will not be for his interest. There was a bustle yesterday about the printer of the "Craftsman;" not jurymen enough appearing, which put the trial off; a vast many gentlemen there, and the mob huzzaed Mr. Pulteney, and said, "Go on, and prosper, for the good of our country!" He said, Miss Sperrit's father was one of the jury; this we were told last night. It is excessively hot and dusty; and being lame still, I have gone very little out, since I had the happiness of seeing you. My Lord talks of going out of town in ten days. Lady Archibald is in town, and begged her compliments to you, dear Madam, when I

write, which I am always fond of doing, to repeat how much and unalterably

I am, dear Madam,
Your most faithful humble servant,
M. Pembroke.

I send my letters to your house in town, not knowing how to direct.

Here is an instance, among many to be found in the correspondence, that Mrs. Clayton's friends persisted in sending her *presents*, although she insisted she never took *bribes*:—

COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Saturday noon.

Dear Madam,

I intended to have seen Herbini's marble tables; but, having by chance mentioned before my Lord, that you wanted one, he has, without my knowledge, sent the best he had, which they call verde antiques, to your house, which he entreats your acceptance of, as a small testimony of the sincere respect he has for you. I wished, you see, dear Madam, to be of some service to you, but it was not in my power; though nothing can ever hinder my being,

Your most faithful and affectionate
humble servant,
M. Pembroke.

If you will give me leave to bespeak your frame, I will take what care I can.

The following letter may interest those who are conversant with the Court gossip of the period, and it affords a specimen, in Lady Pembroke's expressions, of high-bred vulgarity.

COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

July 27th.

MADAM,

I assure you, nothing can equal the pleasure I have in hearing you are well, and have so much goodness, to think of one that has no merit except a heart that is sincerely attached to you and yours, both by inclination and a long series of the greatest obligations. I hear the marriages of Prussia and Holland are again talked of: the Princess Royal of Prussia being only contracted, and that they say is set aside very often; and that the Prince of Nassau goes on again. I shall be extremely glad to have our Princesses so well disposed of. The Lord Chancellor has been very ill, and some think he will not be fit for business long; it is said the seals were offered to Talbot, and refused, the present Chancellor being to retain a large pension out of the salary, but may be only surmise. Lady Ashburnham died this morning; her Lord is very much afflicted, and gone out of town. Everybody seems pleased with Lord Dunmore being Lord of the Bedchamber. The Constable's place is not declared yet. There is a story about town, that Lady Deloraine having said to Lord Delawar, in the

drawing-room, (talking about the tables,) that she had not had the day before a very good dinner; upon which he told her, time was, that her Ladyship had not so good a dinner, and he was sure had sat down to many a worse; that she cried, and the Princesses, who were near, were very much diverted, and laughed mightily. I must confess, if I had been Lady Deloraine, I should have said, that excepting the King's bounty, my Lord Delawar's dinner and mine, at our own houses, would be pretty equal. He dined at the Maids'* table one day, and counted how many bottles of wine they drank less than was set down. I hope the under-butlers will toss him in a blanket. I am afraid you will think me very furious. I was going to the Court yesterday, but my Lord would not let me, being lame still whenever I put a shoe on. The King's journey is now no more talked of than if such a one had never been named. There is a lawsuit between Lady Suffolk and her husband, about the will, which is of so little consequence that I should think it scarce worth it.

I am, dear Madam,
most faithfully,
Your most affectionate humble servant,
M. Pembroke.

My Lord desires his most humble service to you, and was extremely pleased you was so good to mention him.

* Maids of Honour.

It appears, by the opening paragraph of the following letter, that Lady Pembroke obtained the object of her wishes.

COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Iver, March 11th.

I have this moment, my dear Madam, received yours, which I am most extremely obliged to you for, and beg you will believe that it is a pleasure to me you read the inclosed, upon which I desire your advice, whether I should write thanks for, or stay till I come into Nottinghamshire. I am afraid of being impertinent, but would not seem ungrateful or insensible of the Queen's goodness. I am sure you will, dear Madam, bid me do what is right. One of my brother's sons has been dying, which carried me to town last week for a few hours. Dr. Broxolm, I believe (next to God), saved his life, and I, having had these three or four days the swelling at my stomach, have put myself under his direction, and have began his medicines to-day.

I have had a letter from a Barbadoes merchant that insured the ship for 3000*l.*, that assures me there is nothing in the report of its being lost, and that it never was believed in the City. I should have been extremely concerned if that misfortune had happened, on Mr. Mitton's account, who is my brother's secretary, and loves him extremely. How extremely good you are, dear Madam, to think of what concerns me so much. I hope to

go into Nottinghamshire the first week in April, and shall take three of my brother's boys with me. As you give me leave to trouble you so much, I take the liberty to tell you that I have given my Lord's son all the drawings, prints, and books that are of great value, and the gilt sideboard, plate, and silver cistern; he told me they would be of great use to him, and that it was very kind to let him have them.

I cannot express how sensible I must be always of your goodness, and what pleasure it is to think I may pretend to some share of the friendship of the most valuable woman that ever lived. I am, with the utmost truth,

Dear Madam,
Your most obliged and
most faithful humble servant,
M. PEMBROKE.

The next epistle, though short, is full of those concerns which appeared so momentous in their day.

COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

July 8th.

I beg leave, dear Madam, to return my sincere thanks for your most obliging letter, and only wish to deserve the friendship you honour me with. I have heard no one but Mrs. Claverin named for Mrs. Howard's place. Mrs. Purcel, I see, dresses the Queen's head, and Mrs. Howard's business,

now, is to give the Queen her jewels: her salary, I find, is the same she had; being told she had an additional hundred before, for buying the Queen's clothes. The Duchess of Dorset,* I am told, keeps her salary of Mistress of the Robes. Mrs. Howard's friends say she was offered to be Lady of the Bedchamber, which she declined, and wished for any other employment. She has come in the Queen's train to the drawing-room after Lady Deloraine, and has appeared with the most melancholy face that was possible. Lady Lynne's eldest son has recovered, and she has gone to Tunbridge. I will certainly write her word of your goodness for her. I am, dear Madam, most faithfully,

Your most obliged and most
affectionate humble servant,
M. Pembroke.

I am told there has been a great bustle about Lady Susan's showing a letter from Mrs. S., in which she told her (some months ago) that she would have the place; for she herself had made a point of it, that the King has heard of it, and was very angry, and the expression is a by-word now: for Mr. Bloodworth, the Prince was against; and Mr. Herbert, of Wales, they say, made a point of it to Sir Robert.

* Elizabeth Collyer, wife of the first Duke of Dorset. She had been one of the Maids of Honour to Queen Anne; afterwards Mistress of the Robes to Queen Caroline; this office she resigned in favour of Mrs. Howard, in 1734, on becoming Countess of Suffolk, which fixes the date of this letter.

Poor Mrs. Howard paid dearly for the slavery of being a favourite of the King's, and the honours permitted by the half-indignant, half-complaisant Caroline. When she was first appointed Lady of the Bedchamber, in 1728, she applied, through the celebrated Dr. Arbuthnot, to the famous Mrs. Masham, then Lady Masham, for information respecting the duties of her post. Buonaparte, as we learn from a note to the Suffolk Letters, was obliged, on the formation of his Court, to seek for similar directions from Madame Campan, who had been Bedchamber woman to Marie Antoinette. The etiquettes of the Courts of France and England were, in the eighteenth century, much the same.

In consequence of Mrs. Howard's inquiries, Dr. Arbuthnot wrote a grave epistle, which it is impossible to read without smiling. The Bedchamber Woman and the Bedchamber Lady had then, and, according to Miss Burney's Diary, had, in a later reign, some actual duties to perform, which less important personages than Queens and Princesses are so happy as to be allowed to perform for themselves. There is no occasion to enter into the details which Dr. Arbuthnot so plainly particularizes; the curious in such matters may refer to the Suffolk Letters.*

* Vol. i., pp. 292, 293.

Before the Queen was dressed, however, the Bedchamber Lady had only *to look on*, the Page of the Back-stairs bringing in the basin and ewer, whilst the Bedchamber Woman poured the water on the Queen's hands. The Page of the Back-stairs was also called in to put on the Queen's shoes. It must have been a relief unspeakably great to Mrs. Howard to obtain the appointment of Mistress of the Robes, most of the duties of which are performed by deputy; yet the daily rounds of dull gaiety in this most uninteresting of Courts must have been tolerably depressing. "I pity you," writes Lord Chesterfield to Mrs. Howard, "who are forced to endure the tumultuous pleasures of London. I considered you, particularly last Tuesday, suffering the heat and disorders of the masquerade, supported by the Duchess of Richmond of one side, and Miss Fitzwilliam of the other—all three weary and wanting to be gone—upon which, I own, I pitied you so much, that I wished myself there, only to help you out of the crowd." Masquerades, it may be observed, were brought into vogue, about this period, by the noted Heydegger, and they were declared by the legal authorities to be "nuisances."

The subject of the following communication seems to be the selection of an attendant for the

Princess Caroline. The young lady recommended was the eldest daughter of James, fifth Earl of Salisbury.

COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Saturday morning.

DEAR MADAM,

I have thought of one this morning; that is, Lady Anne Cecil, Lord Salisbury's sister. I never saw her, but have heard her extremely commended for a very sober, discreet young woman. I know nothing, whether she will leave her mother or no. She dined, I know, in town with her cousin, young Mrs. Southwell, last week; but perhaps you may think of objections to this that I do not recollect; for the other you named last night, she is a relation, and I never heard a fault she had; but to speak freely and impartially, I fancy, if you were to see her again, you would think her too low and girlish; the Princess Caroline is considerably taller. But your judgment is so excellent in every degree, that I should not have named a thought of mine if you had not commanded it, as you have a right, dear Madam, to do everything that belongs to

Your most obliged and faithful
humble servant,
M. PEMBROKE.

A Court lady, in the habit of walking eight miles a day, and out at six o'clock in the morning,

is, we should think, not readily to be met with in these degenerate days. The next letter gives a curious specimen of a lady supposed to be in delicate health.

COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Langar, May 18th.

I am infinitely obliged to you, dear Madam, for your goodness to me concerning the Princess Royal, and as I am quite ignorant what kind of compliments is proper to be made, both to her Majesty and her, I cannot help wishing extremely you would be so good to write letters for me which I would copy, and inclose to you with great thankfulness for so great and kind a favour. You are very good in thinking about my health, which, I believe you will think much mended, when I tell you that I walk eight miles in a morning, besides going out twice a day in a chaise, and am out at six o'clock in the morning most commonly, and am very busy in gardening, which I take great pleasure in, and have three gentlemen's daughters of this country that are very good-natured and complaisant, that have lived in the house with me ever since I came here, which makes me as easy as I can be till I hear of my brother's being well in Barbadoes. And the people here are so happy to have any one that belongs to him live here, and are, upon his account, so obliging to me, that I believe I shall

pass a great part of my time at this place; where, if I ever could flatter myself with the hopes of seeing you, it would make it the most agreeable one in the world to one that ever must be, dear Madam, with the highest respect and most sincere friendship,

Your most faithful,
humble servant,
M. PEMBROKE.

Lady Pembroke, though holding a place at Court, was evidently not quite satisfied. She was ambitious of being the successor of Lady Suffolk.

COUNTESS OF PEMBROKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Langar, Nov. 17th.

MADAM,

I am infinitely obliged for your goodness in letting me know the Queen is better, and I hope is now in perfect health. I was not a little surprised at Lady Suffolk's quitting the Court, and imagine it must make a great deal of discourse. I am almost afraid to mention a wish I cannot help having, to you, which is, that I had her place instead of my own. The opportunities of serving and waiting on the Queen the same, and the uncertainty of my health, and being obliged to be, on my brother's account, so much in the country, would make it excessively convenient to me. As I am very sure whatever I say to you never is

known, I should be extremely glad to know your thoughts of it, which would add to the many obligations I have all my life owed to you, and shall own, with the sincerest gratitude and respect always, how much I am, dear Madam,

Your most obliged and faithful
humble servant,
M. PEMBROKE.

CHAPTER XI.

Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford — His political career — Treachery of Harley and Bolingbroke—Edward, second Earl of Oxford—He writes to Mrs. Clayton respecting his presentation to the King — States his having obtained a patent for holding a market—Eustace Budgell—His connexion with Addison—His Essays—Respectability of his position—Writes a lampoon upon the Duke of Bolton—Is obliged to leave Ireland—The Duke's enmity follows him to England—Loses 20,000*l.* by the South Sea scheme—Is prevented joining the Duke of Portland, when appointed Governor of Jamaica—Fails to get into Parliament—Attacks Sir Robert Walpole—Commits suicide.

CHAPTER XI.

It appears singular, in the following letters, to find the son of the Lord Treasurer Harley declaring himself to be one not "well versed in courts." But it is well known, that when these epistles were written, the ex-minister had long been regarded with suspicion by George II., and, as it appears from many authorities, not without good reason.

Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, and father of Mrs. Clayton's correspondent, was one of the most repulsive of public characters—a man, placed by correspondent circumstances in a false position, and acting, all his life, a part of subterfuge. There is now no doubt but that his prepossessions were those of the Jacobite party. It is curious to trace hereditary predilections. The family of Harley, long seated in Herefordshire, had wavered between Presbyterianism and Royalism in the troubles of the seventeenth century. The latest of Robert Harley's ancestors had aided in bring-

ing about the Restoration; yet the future minister of Queen Anne professed Whig principles upon his first taking his place as member for Tregony. Again, however, the inherent Toryism of his nature prevailed, and he went over to the highest of the high-flyers.

He was afterwards, in 1701, made Speaker of the House of Commons, an honour which he retained until 1704, when he became Secretary of State, chiefly through the assistance of the famous Abigail Hill, whose marriage with Mr. Masham, one of the Queen's pages, Harley had the address to promote; he was afterwards appointed Lord Treasurer, and in May, 1711, created Earl of Oxford. Harley continued to be Prime Minister until 1714, when, three days before the Queen's death, he was dismissed. The various intrigues by which his influence was obtained, "his back-stairs" negotiations, as the Duchess of Marlborough called them, are rather sickening than amusing. Harley should never have quitted the office of Speaker, for which he was well qualified; his was not the grasp of mind to rule the destinies of a great empire.

Macky relates of him, that, as Speaker, no man better understood the management of the claims to the advantage of his party, nor knew

better the tricks of the House. "He is skilful," adds this writer, "in most things, and very eloquent; is a very useful man, and, for that reason, is well for the Ministry."

Harley was wounded, in 1711, by Guiscard, a French abbot and refugee, who had become a spy at the English Court. Guiscard's object was discovered, and in a fit of rage and despair, he stabbed Harley with a pen-knife. The wound was not dangerous; but the Minister continued long under medical care. To Dr. Arbuthnot, who attended him, Swift wrote:—

> "On Britain, Europe's safety lies;
> Britain is lost if Harley dies.
> Harley depends upon your skill;
> Think what you save, or what you kill."

The wound inflicted by Guiscard brought so great an accession of popularity to Harley, as well as an accession of honour—for he was made Lord Treasurer and created a Peer immediately on his recovery—that Bolingbroke was jealous of the misfortune; and he is said, also, to have been indignant at Harley's having chosen the title of Earl of Oxford, which had been long in his own family. Their secret feuds broke out into open rivalry; but it was the refusal of Harley to secure to Lady Masham, his former ally, as Abigail Hill,

a grant of fifteen hundred a year, settled on her by Queen Anne, that procured his dismissal in 1714.

There is now very strong evidence, from collections made by Sir James Mackintosh, in the Archives of the Foreign Office at Paris for 1714, quoted in the hundred and twenty-fifth number of the "Edinburgh Review," that Harley and Bolingbroke held a close correspondence with the French government for some years previous to the peace of Utrecht. During all this time, Harley was loud in professions of attachment to the Electoral Prince — in the minds of his own party, that of the Jacobites, his coldness, distrust, and vacillations, inspired disgust. In the midst of this duplicity, Bolingbroke was wont to boast of the honesty of these proceedings; whilst it is admitted, even by the partial biographer of Bolingbroke,* that in separating England from her allies, in taking part with the enemy, and in negotiating a separate peace, Bolingbroke acted a treacherous part, in which Harley, though less bold and decisive than his colleague, was doubtless implicated. It is no wonder that the name of Jacobite, coupled with such deception, should become one of reproach.

* Wingrove Cooke.

In August, 1715, Harley was impeached by the House of Commons. He was committed to the Tower, where, after two years' imprisonment, he was brought before the House of Lords, was acquitted and discharged. He died on the twenty-first of May, 1724. The Earl of Oxford was a great encourager of learned men and literature, and a great collector of curious manuscripts, especially of those relating to English history.

Edward, second Earl of Oxford, the author of the following letters to Mrs. Clayton, inherited his father's laudable taste for collecting manuscripts; and to his care and zeal the country is indebted for the Harleian Collection, purchased by Parliament for the British Museum, after his Lordship's death, in 1754. He married Lady Henrietta Cavendish Holles, only daughter and heiress of John Holles, last Duke of Newcastle. By this lady, Lord Oxford had one daughter, Margaret Cavendish, who was married, in 1734, to William Duke of Portland. To this lady, also, descended the hereditary taste for antiquities and curiosities; and her possession of the famous Barberini, or Portland Vase, was the envy of her contemporaries. Most of the letters of Mrs. Elizabeth Montague were addressed to her; and if we may believe the compliments of a correspondent, whose friend-

ship, however, was afterwards broken off, the Duchess of Portland had every imaginable accomplishment and virtue.

The subject of the following letters is chiefly the patent for forming Oxford Market, to obtain which the interest of Mrs. Clayton, as in every other matter,—whether of Bishoprics or Bedchamber Women,—seems to have been essential. The well-known Jacobite tendencies of the Harley family increased, no doubt, the difficulty of compassing "the market."

THE EARL OF OXFORD TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Dover-street, June 14, 1731.

MADAM,

You are always so very indulgent to me that I am encouraged to take this liberty, and I hope for your pardon. I waited to hear from the Duke of Newcastle till this day, but not hearing from him, I wrote to him, and inclosed is his Grace's answer. I have your approbation, I suppose, to do this, to pay my duty to the King and Queen on Thursday next, and to write to the Duke of Newcastle on Wednesday, that I desire he will present me to the King on Thursday. I design to take another day to ask the King's favour in my affair of the market. This I submit to you, and if you think any other way is better, I shall em-

brace what you shall dictate, for I am sure it will be right.

The shortness of your stay at Hampton Court makes me the more pressing of appearing there, when I may have the chance of waiting on you, for I am with true respect and esteem,

Madam,

Your most obedient,

most humble servant,

OXFORD.

P.S.—If you approve of my coming on Thursday, I would take some opportunity of waiting on you, if I knew what hour would be most agreeable.

THE EARL OF OXFORD TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Wimpole, Nov. 7th, 1731.

MADAM,

The obliging and friendly part you was pleased to take in relation to our affair of the market, is one reason for giving you this trouble, which is to acquaint you that at last it is gone through all the offices, and the Great Seal is put to the patent. At the Privy Seal and at the Great Seal, I had all the opposition that could be raised against the patent. I am certain you will pardon this interruption, to receive an account of the success of an affair you have expressed so much favour for. I assure you that it is a great disappointment to us that we could not have the pleasure of your company at this place, and Mr. Clay-

ton's this year: I hope the next will prove more favourable to us.

I am, with great truth and esteem,
Madam,
Your most obedient,
most humble servant,
OXFORD.

COUNTESS OF OXFORD TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Wimpole, Nov. 7th, 1731.

MADAM,

I designed myself the pleasure of writing to you, if I had not received the favour of your obliging letter. I have informed you the affair of the market was finished to our satisfaction. You having engaged yourself so earnestly and successfully in it, I should think myself very much to blame if I did not take this opportunity of repeating my thanks. If earnest wishes for health and happiness long continued to you and Mr. Clayton could have any effect, you both would constantly enjoy those blessings, for you will ever have my sincere wishes attend you. I confess I was much disappointed to find, I yet was not fortunate enough to fix upon a time you could come hither. I shall endeavour to wait on you as often as I can at London, and I shall be desirous to find a time to have your company here. Amongst the many that profess friendship to you, I will not allow any to do it more unfeignedly than myself. I have been under a great deal of concern occasioned by my

daughter having a fever; I think now the danger is over, she having an intermission, which gave room for her taking the bark.

I forbear to make Lord Oxford's compliments, because he writes himself. Peggy is your humble servant. I am with great esteem,

Your obliged,
obedient servant,
H. Cavendish Holles Oxford.

There are other letters from the Earl and Countess of Oxford, in this collection, some of which will be inserted in their proper place in this work.

One subject of general discussion at this period was a work entitled the "Memoirs of the Boyle Family," by Budgell—one of the ill-fated sons of genius in his generation; and the next letter from Dr. Clarke touches upon this book.

"No family," observes Horace Walpole, "perhaps ever produced in so short a time so many distinguished persons as the house of Boyle." Their historian, Eustace Budgell, upon whom very severe strictures are made in the letters of Dr. Alured Clarke, was almost as remarkable a character as some of those whom he eulogized.

He was the cousin, and not, as Dr. Clarke states, the nephew of Addison, whose mother, and Mr.

Budgell's mother were cousins-german. But Budgell enjoyed the steady friendship of his celebrated kinsman, and being not on good terms with his father, the patronage of Addison was of considerable importance to him.

Brought up to the profession of the law, yet restricted by the narrowness of the means which his father allowed him, from prosecuting his legal studies, young Budgell was thankful to accept a situation offered to him by Addison, when, in 1709, the Earl of Wharton becoming Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Addison obtained the appointment of his Lordship's Secretary. In Ireland, Addison and Budgell lived constantly together, and notwithstanding the inequality of their conditions, their regard continued unabated, a circumstance creditable to both. Budgell was lively, witty, eloquent—but he was vain and presuming. In his compositions, he emulated the style of his accomplished patron; and twenty-eight papers in the Spectator attest the success of his attempt, and the elegance of his style—those marked with a cross in the first seven volumes, being the production of Budgell's pen. They, however, do not possess the closeness and vigour of Addison's incomparable essays. They have, observes an eminent writer, "the appearance of Addison in an undress."

Having written a humorous epilogue to the "Distressed Mother," Budgell defended that *jeu d'esprit* against an attack in the Spectator, by another paper, written by himself, and sounding loudly his own praise. Caressed in society, endowed with the goods of fortune,—having succeeded in 1711 to estates of 950*l.* a-year in value,—employed in offices of trust in Ireland, honourable and happy, there might have been anticipated for Mr. Budgell a career of unmixed prosperity. Like Addison, he was prudent and respectable, indefatigable in his office, as Comptroller and Accountant-General for Ireland, and an useful servant of the public.

A lampoon, the result of some private quarrel, upon the Duke of Bolton, who, in 1717, became Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, was, however, indiscreetly published by Mr. Budgell, and he was advised to leave Ireland. The enmity of his powerful foe followed him to the English Court. No merit, no services, availed against that influence—he was, at length, obliged to quit public life, to retire, and to live upon his patrimonial property. But so active a mind could not rest, and the unhappy man became madly involved in the South Sea scheme; he lost 20,000*l.*, and was reduced to the verge of ruin. He had a fellow

sufferer in the Duke of Portland, and that nobleman was gratified by the exertions which Mr. Budgell, qualified as he was by his talents and experience, made to retrieve the affairs of the company. The Duke, whose fortune had been destroyed in 1720, accepted, in order to retrieve it, the Governorship of Jamaica, and he offered Budgell the place of Secretary. The proposal was accepted, and the Secretary, accustomed as he was to the first society, was to live with the Duke as a friend and brother. All was arranged, when the Duke of Portland received an intimation from the Secretary of State that he might take *any* man in England as his secretary, *except* Mr. Budgell.

The spirit of the persecuted gentleman was, at first, infuriated; and afterwards, broken by this relentless conduct. To make his wrongs known, he tried to get into Parliament, and spent five thousand pounds—his *all*, in the vain attempt. It is creditable to the memory of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, that she afterwards gave him a thousand pounds to endeavour still to obtain a seat—but even that project failed.

Virulent attacks upon Sir Robert Walpole, and other political writings, now occupied the disappointed author. He published his case in a

"Letter to the Craftsman," and the pamphlet ran through nine editions. He wrote another, called "Liberty and Property," showing how collections of letters from Addison and others, had been taken from him, in a sponging-house. That detention was illegal, and Mr. Budgell prosecuted the bailiff, appeared as a barrister, and pleaded his own cause—a verdict was obtained—but the letters were lost.

The Memoirs of the Boyles were published in 1732. Then the "Bee," a weekly pamphlet, written by the same author, appeared; of this, only a hundred numbers issued from the press, and it came to an untimely end. Much was still expected by this unhappy man from the will of his uncle, Dr. Matthew Tindal, but the sum of two thousand two hundred pounds only, was bequeathed to him by that relative. Beggared in fortune, involved in lawsuits, Budgell had returned to his original profession of the law, but he obtained no practice. His mind gave way, and he formed a deliberate plan to end his existence. It must be remarked, that this able man, so essentially a man of the world, had no belief in Revelation. His scheme was effected systematically. On the fourth of May, 1737, he took a boat at Somerset Stairs, and ordered the waterman to shoot the

bridge; during that movement, he threw himself overboard. He sank instantly, for his pockets were filled with stones. Some days afterwards his body was found, bruised and disfigured. He had one tie to life—a natural daughter, (for he had never been married,) whom, the morning that he left home, he endeavoured to induce to accompany him, and perish!—a singular attempt, which has the aspect of insanity. She refused, and afterwards, assuming her father's name, became an actress at Drury Lane. On quitting his house for ever, Budgell left a slip of paper, on which was written these words—

> "What Cato did, and Addison approved,
> Cannot be wrong."

But this insinuation, that Addison approved, or excused self-murder, is disproved by the dying words of his hero—

> "And yet, methinks a gleam of light breaks in
> On my departing soul. Alas! I fear
> I've been too hasty. O, ye powers that search
> The heart of man, and weigh his inmost thoughts,
> If I have done amiss, impute it not;
> The best may err, but you are good, and——Oh!"

CHAPTER XII.

The Boyle family—Their origin—Richard, the great Earl of Cork—Curious anecdote of his marriage—Distinguishes himself during the great rebellion in favour of Charles I.—His death—His character—Account of Richard, his eldest son—His public services—Lord Broghill as a soldier, poet, and statesman—Robert Boyle—Perils encountered in early life—Scientific education—Travels abroad—Returns to England during the civil war—Joins the Royal Society—His philosophical studies—Reasons published by him for not practising alchemy—His Christian virtues—Death of his sister, Lady Ranelagh, immediately followed by his own—Dr. Burnet's funeral sermon—Boyle's pretensions as a philosopher—Boylean lectures—Characteristics of a great man—Invention of the Orrery—Charles Earl of Orrery—His scientific acquirements—Duel with Mr. Wortley—Is consigned to the Tower—His son, Lord Boyle—His noble conduct on his father having left an unsatisfactory will—His published works—Dr. Alured Clarke writes to Mrs. Clayton an account of Budgell's "Memoirs of the Family of the Boyles"—Addison and Lord Halifax.

CHAPTER XII.

THE great family of Boyle whom Mr. Budgell commemorated, owed their origin, it has been affirmed, to a noble Spanish race, one of whom is said to have come over to England from Arragon, and to have distinguished himself at a tournament in the reign of Henry V. But this notion has been refuted, and the honour of giving the origin to the Boyles is assigned to the county of Hereford, wherein, at the Manor of Pixely, near Ledbury, they are recorded, in Domesday-book, to have been anciently seated, the surname being formerly Binvill.

Richard, the *great* Earl of Cork, in Queen Elizabeth's time, emigrated, in 1588, to Dublin; he was poor, and owed the rise of his fortunes to a successful marriage, and to a dowry of five hundred pounds given with his first wife. Prudent and frugal, he soon accumulated money, notwithstanding the slender means with which he set out in life. "When I first arrived in Dublin, in Ire-

land," wrote this celebrated man, in after years, reviewing, perhaps not without satisfaction, the struggles of his early life, "all my wealth was twenty-seven pounds two shillings, besides two tokens which my mother had given me; namely, a diamond ring, which I have ever since, and still do wear, and a bracelet of gold, worth about ten pounds; a taffety waistcoat cut with and upon taffety; a pair of black velvet breeches, laced; a new Milan fustian suit, laced and cut upon with taffety; two cloaks, competent linen, and necessaries; with my rapier and dagger; and since, the blessing of God, whose heavenly providence hath guided me hither, hath enriched my weak estate in the beginning with such a fortune as I need not envy any of my neighbours, and added no care or burthen to my conscience thereunto."

During the troublous times of Florence Mac Carthy's rebellious efforts, Richard Boyle performed essential service to the State. He quickly rose in a period of adventure, when honest and valiant men could shine forth. He was patronized by Cecil, and became the friend of Raleigh, whose estate he purchased, at the recommendation of that great man. In 1603, he was knighted, and on the same day, he married the daughter of Sir Geoffery Fenton. A curious anecdote has been

told relative to this marriage. Mr. Boyle was one day detained, whilst waiting to speak to his wife's father on business, in an ante-chamber. A nurse was standing there, with a young child in her arms; and with this little creature Mr. Boyle amused himself; and when Sir Geoffery entered, he told him that he had been courting his daughter, and begged that he might be her suitor. Sixteen years afterwards, he wooed her in right earnest, and his fortunes progressed rapidly after that connexion. He owed to Queen Elizabeth the foundation of his greatness; but the superstructure, observes his biographer, was raised by James the First. In 1616, he was created Baron Youghal, and four years afterwards, Earl of Cork and Lord Dungarvon; but his felicity was interrupted by the death of his Countess, after bringing him fifteen children; among whom were some who became afterwards the most distinguished men of their time.

From the jealousy of the Earl of Strafford during his vicegerency, Lord Cork suffered greatly; and he became afterwards a witness against that unfortunate man. Upon one occasion, when Lord Cork had commenced a suit at law, that imperious nobleman had said to him, "Call in your writ; for I tell you, if you will not, I will clap you

in the Castle; for I tell you, I will not have my will disputed by law nor lawyers." Yet the Earl of Cork was acquitted both by friends and foes of any design of injuring Strafford, or of perpetrating a mean revenge.

The Earl of Cork returned to Ireland, and encountered all the horrors of the rebellion there. He had been educated as a lawyer, yet he prepared now to act the part of a soldier, as well as if it had been his original profession. He conducted himself with the gallantry of a cavalier, and with the moderation of a humane, reflective man. Four valiant sons assisted him at different posts; the youngest, Francis, was retained near his own person; one, the Lord Kinalmeaky, fell at the battle of Liscarroll in 1642.

Like the Marquis of Worcester, in the same period, Lord Cork fortified his own castle of Lismore, paid his troops himself, and when his money was spent, gave up his plate for the Royal cause. That cause now became almost hopeless, and poverty and hardships began to shake the strength, both bodily and mental, of this great man. His estates were now wasted, his towns had become garrisons, his houses, fortresses; his tenants were in the field, his servants doing military duty in his very presence, whilst his property

was sold to pay all. Such were the difficulties of the poor royalists in those days.

The spirits of the old man, though maintained in public, gradually gave way beneath the pressure of calamities; and, to use the expressive phrase of an old-fashioned writer, he "broke apace." He died of age and care, and was buried on the very same day on which a cessation of arms was signed with the Irish at Sigginstown, September the fifteenth, 1643. He was interred at Youghal, where he had erected a monument to his family. The Earl of Cork left behind him a reputation such as many of his order might do well to emulate. "With all the great estate he arrived at," observes the historian Borlase, "(which was the greatest in the memory of the last age,) none ever taxed him with exorbitances, but such as thought princes had too little, and religious men not enough." His exertions in the promotion of public works—his churches, almshouses, free-schools, bridges, castles, were all directed to the interest of the English nation and to the advancement of the protestant faith in Ireland; for he was well aware that the interest of the two kingdoms could not be disunited. He was, in truth, a blessing to his adopted country, and an honour to his generation.

Never was a man so blessed in the character of

his children as the great Earl of Cork; and their hereditary integrity and talent were not confined even to them, but were extended to their sons. Richard, the eldest son of the Earl of Cork, succeeded his father in that title, to which, in 1663, was added that of Earl of Burlington. By his marriage into the Clifford family, an union promoted by Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, he acquired influence at the Court of Charles the First, to whom he proved a zealous adherent. Beloved and happy in private life, and moderate and enlightened in his public conduct, this nobleman continued to serve Charles as long as any one place held out for that king in England. He was then forced to compound for his estate with the Parliament, which he did for the sum of six hundred and thirty-one pounds; but he afterwards encountered great pecuniary difficulties; and although he returned to live in Ireland as carefully as possible, his Countess was forced to apply to Cromwell for redress.

Notwithstanding his impaired fortunes, the Earl aided Charles the Second with money, at the time of the Restoration. He continued faithful to the Stuarts, until he found that James the Second intended to overthrow the Constitution. Then he gave up the various employments which

he had under the crown. He hailed the coming of William the Third, as affording a prospect of national calm and prosperity, but neither sought nor accepted office under that monarch. Thus loyal, wise, and consistent, he was neither a furious and mischievous partizan, nor a treacherous friend.

Two distinguished brothers added lustre to the family—Roger, Earl of Orrery, and Robert, the celebrated philosopher. The first of these, best known in Irish history as Lord Broghill, took a leading part in the commotions of Ireland during the Protectorate. That he joined Cromwell, was one of those painful facts of which the inconsistency of mankind offers a mournful solution. Eventually, he incurred the suspicion both of Cromwell and of Ireton, who declared that they could never be safe while Broghill was alive. He afterwards displayed a sincere wish to promote the Restoration, and for his services was created, in 1660, Earl of Orrery. His employments under the Protector were, however, not deemed injurious to Charles the Second, to whose return he is said to have contributed more than any man, Monk excepted. Skilful as a statesman, and admirable in the field, the sunset of his active life was as glo-

rious as the beginning. As an author, he ranked high at a time when, observes the author of the "Biographia Britannica," "it was no uncommon thing for titles to adorn a title-page." In his private life, he was eminently virtuous, charitable, and consistent; he was in all cases solicitous that a man should thrive, as well as have the means of subsistence: he frequently observed of his servants, that the meanest of them had a soul to save, and he was alike careful of their "minds, bodies, and estates."

As a dramatist, the Earl was not eminent. "He never," remarks Horace Walpole, "made a bad figure but as an author." That accomplished writer sums up the rest of his character in these few but comprehensive words:—

"As a soldier, his bravery was distinguished, his stratagems remarkable; as a statesman, it is sufficient to say he had the confidence of Cromwell; as a man, he was grateful, and would have supported the son of his friend. Like Cicero and Richelieu, he could not be content without being a poet. The sensible author of a very curious life in the 'Biographia,' seems to be as bad a judge of poetry as his lordship, or Cicero, when he says, that his writings were never flat

and trivial. What does he think of a hundred such lines as these?

> "When to the wars of Aquitaine I went,
> I made a friendship with the Earl of Kent."*

Lord Orrery composed a romance, "Parthenissa," intended to be completed in three folio volumes; "enough," observes Walpole, "to content the most heroic appetite possible." Alluding to the poems of Lord Orrery on the "Fasts and Festivals," he remarks—"I should act with respect to these as I should about the romance; not read them, not because they were never finished, but because they were ever begun. We are told his Lordship always wrote when he had a fit of the gout, which, it seems, was a very impotent Muse."

Robert Boyle, the greatest, though not the last, in this list of eminent warriors and statesmen, "was," as his biographer remarks, "a man superior to titles, and almost to praise. He was the seventh son, and the fourteenth child, of the *great* Earl of Cork, and was born at Lismore, in Cork, on the twenty-fifth of February, 1626, 7. Such was the importance that his family acquired, that this, the flower of that band of gallant sons, was the only one who attained to manhood without being

* Royal and Noble Authors.

honoured with a title. His education was commenced upon the hardy, almost Spartan system of the day: he was committed to the care of a country nurse, with instructions from his father to bring him up as if he had been her own son, and thus to secure a degree of vigour which was afterwards lost by over-attention to his health.

Some serious disadvantages ensued from this plan. Mr. Boyle's mother died when he was three years old; he had never seen her, or only in the unconsciousness of infancy—a subject of regret to him through life. He also contracted, from some children who were his playmates in his adopted home, a habit of stammering, which he never lost. He remained at nurse during seven years, when he returned to his father's house, where he learned to write a very fair hand, and to speak French and Latin. One of the Earl's chaplains was his tutor, and he also received instructions from a Frenchman, who was domiciled at Lismore Castle. He was afterwards sent to England, to be under his father's old friend, Sir Henry Wotton, at Eton.

In the course of his childhood, many singular escapes from immediate danger befel the future philosopher. During a journey to Dublin, the coach in which he was travelling, in crossing a stream of water, was carried away by the current, and he

narrowly escaped being drowned. He was rescued by one of his father's gentlemen; the vehicle was dashed to pieces. In crossing to England, he ran a great risk of being captured by some of the Turkish pirates who then infested the Irish coast; yet he landed safely at Bristol. Once, the chamber in which he was sleeping fell, and Mr. Boyle fell with it, and he must have been choked with the rubbish, had he not, by wrapping his head in a sheet, been able to breathe without difficulty. Another time, he was nearly crushed to pieces by a starting horse. Throwing himself back, he disengaged himself from the stirrups, and was saved. Lastly, he was nearly poisoned by the mistake of an apothecary's servant, who brought him a powerful emetic instead of a cooling julep. The account of various accidents he committed to writing.

The charmed life thus so providentially preserved was devoted to those studies which exalt human nature, and give almost a foretaste of heavenly enjoyments. At fourteen, Boyle reflected deeply on religious subjects, not without some doubts and difficulties; but for these he was afterwards thankful, since they led him coolly and closely to study the gospel, and to arrive at the blessed conviction that it opened the only path for salvation. Meantime, to counteract a

distraction of thought, which he attributed to the early perusal of romances, the youth devoted himself to mathematics. He had the faculty of applying all that he learned to some use. The practical parts of trigonometry delighted him much. Geography was to him "like travelling on paper—astronomy, a voyage to the heavens." His ardent spirit for improvement was restrained rather than urged on by his tutor, Mr. Marcombes, who had also educated his elder brothers.

His grasping mind was not destined to owe its perfection to an English university; Geneva was the scene of its speculations, under the guidance still of Mr. Marcombes. After travelling in Italy, and spending some time at Florence,—the death of Galileo happening in a neighbouring village while he was there,—Mr. Boyle returned to his native country, to find it in a state of rebellion, his father dead, and his estates in jeopardy. He was, however, afterwards enabled to procure protection both for the English and Irish estates left to him by his father, and to reside at Stalbridge, whence he journeyed sometimes to Oxford, sometimes to London, applying himself, not dismayed by the distractions of the times, to philosophy and literature, and cultivating the acquaintance of the learned and scientific.

Before the age of twenty, he had published his "Seraphic Love," and his "Free Discourse against customary Swearing." And, amid the calamities of the Great Rebellion arose that nursery of science, the Royal Society. A small, learned body of men, among whom Boyle was a leading member, first held their meetings in London, afterwards in Oxford. By Boyle, this little society was called the Invisible College; by the rest, the Philosophical College. After the Restoration, it was incorporated; of its subsequent success, modern readers must be well informed. During all these exertions, the youthful philosopher endured the agonies of the *stone*—a disease to which his sedentary habits naturally contributed; but it did not diminish his ardour in the pursuit of knowledge. He lived, excepting when the claims of a numerous kindred called him from home, in retirement; his reputation rising daily, nevertheless, even whilst he was yet a boy, and extending throughout England.

After visiting his estates in Ireland, Boyle took up his residence at Oxford, not in the seclusion of a college, but in the house of an apothecary named Crosse, who attended upon him professionally; yet he led the life of a collegian, and assembling around him his friends of the Invisible

Society, he lived in so holy and philosophic a calm, that his friend Lord Clarendon pressed him to enter into holy orders. The reason that Boyle gave, after some hesitation, for declining to follow that counsel, was characteristic of his scrupulous mind. He said, "that he felt within himself no motion, or tendency of mind, that he could safely esteem a call from the Holy Ghost, which, according to the form used by the Church of England, is affirmed by such as enter into holy orders." He continued, however, to advance the cause of Christianity by his works, by his example, and his conversation; and remained in his beloved seclusion, coming forth only into the world when the cause of virtue, or of learning, or religion required it.

Nor were his exertions confined to Great Britain. He was active in his efforts to extend the benefits of the gospel to New England; and in after life, when he had become an East India director, he caused five hundred copies of the Bible in the Malayan tongue to be printed at Oxford, at his own expense, and sent to the East Indies.

In this sketch of his labours, it is impossible to give even a faint notion of their vast extent, of their immense importance to this country, and of their inestimable value to all reflective persons.

It is, perhaps, better to borrow from Robert Boyle's own words, in order to express his sentiments with regard to that course of life which he had adopted.

"As to those," says he, "who think it strange that among my other experiments, about metals and minerals, I have not produced those gainful ones that alchemists call particulars, it may, I hope, suffice to represent, that being a bachelor, and through God's bounty furnished with a competent estate for a younger brother, and freed from any ambition to leave my heirs rich, I had no need to pursue lucriferous experiments, to which I so much preferred luciferous ones, that I had a kind of ambition (which I now perceive to have been a vanity) of being able to say that I cultivated chemistry with a disinterested mind, neither seeking, nor scarce caring for any other advantages by it than those of the improvement of my own knowledge of nature, the gratifying the curious and the industrious, and the forming of some useful helps to make good and uncommon mechanics. If I may be allowed to judge of courses by the success, the entertainment that the public has been pleased to give my endeavours to serve it, will not make me repent of the way I have made choice of to do it in. But, however, since I find myself now grown old, to leave a

kind of hermetic legacy to the studious disciples of that art, and to deliver candidly, in the annexed paper, some processes, chemical and mechanical, that are less simple and plain than those barely luciferous ones I have been wont to affect, and of a more difficult and elaborate kind than those I have hitherto published, and more akin to the noblest hermetic secrets, or as Helmont styles them, Arcana majora."

It is, indeed, both edifying and cheering to know that the greatest philosopher of his day, he who had the most carefully studied physical science, was the most earnest and hopeful of believers. In his work, entitled "The Christian Virtuoso," showing that by being addicted to experimental philosophy, a man is rather assisted than indisposed to be a good Christian, he controverts an illiberal, yet too widely extended prejudice, which seems to have been as widely diffused in those days as in ours—a suspicion unjustly entertained of the lovers of truth—as if physical knowledge were not an additional means of tracing the attributes of the Deity—a source of humble rejoicing, thanksgiving, and hope, in the deepened convictions of universal benevolence and design.

At length, the delicate frame which had so long struggled with a mortal disease showed manifest

symptoms of decline. Mr. Boyle had, for some time, removed to the house of his sister, Lady Ranelagh, in Pall Mall, when he was warned by increasing weakness to settle his worldly affairs. In this state of debility, he whose life had been so peculiarly blessed was afflicted by the death of that beloved and accomplished sister, whose affection Mr. Boyle had deemed it his singular and great happiness to enjoy. On the twenty-third of December, 1691, she expired.

Her brother survived her only a week—he died in the sixty-fifth year of his age, and his remains are interred in the Church of St. Martin in the Fields, by the side of Lady Ranelagh. His funeral was as private as those obsequies could be which were attended by numerous persons of distinction. Bishop Burnet preached his funeral sermon.

"His knowledge," said this celebrated prelate, the personal friend of the deceased philosopher, "was of so vast an extent, that if it were not for the variety of vouchers, in their several sorts, I should be afraid to say all I know. He carried the study of the Hebrew very far into the Rabbinical writings, and the other Oriental languages. He had read so much of the Fathers that he had formed out of it a clear judgment of all the eminent ones. He had read a vast deal on the Scriptures,

and had gone very nearly through the whole controversies of religion, and was a true master of the whole body of divinity. He read the whole compass of the mathematical sciences; and though he did not set himself to spring any new game, yet he knew even the remotest parts of geometry; geography in the several parts of it that related to navigation or travelling; history or books of travel were his diversions. He went very nearly through all the parts of physic, only the tenderness of his nature made him less able to endure the exactness of anatomical dissections, especially of living animals, though he knew these to be most interesting."

"But for the history of nature, ancient and modern, of the productions of all countries, of the virtues and improvements of plants, of ores and mineral, he was by much, by very much the readiest and perfectest I ever knew. This put him in the way of making all that vast variety of experiments beyond any man, as far as we know, that ever lived. And in these, as he made a great progress in new discoveries, so he used so nice a strictness, and delivered them with so scrupulous a truth, that all who have examined them, have found how safely the world may depend upon them. But his peculiar and favourite study was

chemistry, in which he engaged with none of those selfish and ambitious designs, that allure many into them. His design was only to find out Nature, to see into what principles things might be resolved, and of what they were compounded, and to prepare good medicaments for the bodies of men. He spent neither his time nor fortune upon the vain pursuits of high promises and pretensions. He always kept himself within the compass that his estate might well bear."

With regard to Mr. Boyle's station in the scientific world, we cannot be surprised to find a difference of opinion. By his contemporaries he was considered as one whose genius had produced results of the first order. "We are accustomed," observes a modern writer, "to talk of Bacon, Newton, and Boyle together. The merits of Boyle are indeed singular, and almost unprecedented; his discoveries are, in several cases, of the highest utility; but we do not think the inference that they were of a reasoning power, or a distinctive sagacity of the highest kind, would be correct."*

"Boyle," observes Mr. Brande, in a discourse prefixed to the Supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica, "has left voluminous proofs of his attachment to scientific pursuits, but his experi-

* Art. Boyle, Penny Cyclopædia.

ments are too miscellaneous and desultory to have afforded either brilliant or useful results; his reasoning is seldom satisfactory, and a broad vein of prolixity traverses his philosophical works. He was too fond of mechanical philosophy to shine in chemistry, and gave too much time and attention to theological and metaphysical controversy to attaining excellence in either of the former studies. He who would do justice to Boyle's scientific character must found it rather upon the indirect benefits which he conferred, than upon any immediate aid which he lent to science. He exhibited a variety of experiments in public, which kindled the zeal of others more capable than himself. He was always open to conviction, and courted opposition and controversy upon the principle that truth is often elicited by the conflict of opinions."

The last act of this great man was to found, by an endowment of certain property, the Boylean Lectures, instituted for proving the Christian religion against Atheists, Jews, Mahommedans, &c., not descending lower to any controversies among Christians themselves. Eight sermons were to be preached in the year. The stipend was made perpetual by Archbishop Tennison, and Dr. Bentley was appointed the first Boyle lecturer.

One cannot but feel intense curiosity concerning

the last days of such a man—how he met that summons to eternity, for which his whole career had been a preparation; and whether *the fear of death*, an emotion incident even to the greatest and best minds, ever visited his chastened spirit.

We are told that he was not wholly devoid of this peculiar and natural apprehension, but it was upon these grounds. He imagined that if sickness should confine him to bed, the agonies of *the stone*, that excruciating disease, might be fearfully increased, and that his last minutes might prove too hard for him. That beneficent Providence which had guarded his childhood from dangers, spared him this trial. His feeble frame was soon released from that dreaded passage to rest—he sank, after being only four hours confined to his bed, so that "it was plain," observes the writer of the biography, "the lamp merely went out for want of oil to maintain the flame."

In person, Boyle was tall and very slender, and his face pale and emaciated. The portraits of him convey to the mind the personification of thought, and suffering. His mode of living, prescribed by the learned, and adhered to by rigid principle, was simple in the extreme,—he eat merely to sustain nature, never to gratify appetite. He was not

married, but, according to Evelyn, had loved, or had courted the beautiful and accomplished daughter of Cary, Earl of Monmouth. His "Seraphic Love" is said to have originated from this ill-starred passion. But the great object of his life was Philosophy—from the highest and noblest motives—the desire of benefiting society, by manifesting the goodness of our Divine Parent.

In a letter to Lady Barrymore, his niece, upon a rumour of his intending to marry, the philosopher thus expressed himself upon that subject. "You have certainly reason, Madam, to suspend your belief of a marriage, celebrated by no priest but fame, and made, unknown to the supposed bridegroom: I shall therefore only tell you that the little gentleman and I are still at the old defiance. You have carried away too many of the perfections of your sex, to leave enough in this country for the reducing so stubborn a heart as mine, whose conquest were a task of so much difficulty, and is so little worth it, that the latter property is always likely to deter any that hath beauty and mind enough to overcome the former."

The characteristics of this great and excellent man were truth and modesty. He began life by exciting in the minds of his friends those hopes as to future excellence which sometimes injure their

object, but which in him were more than realized, —yet he was courteous, and unpretending;—as it is expressively said, "like other men." No peculiarities injured the effects of his exertions, nor gave the envious a plea to cavil. In his youth, he was hasty in temper, yet, in spite of exhausting and anxious labours—in spite of a cruel disease—Christianity did her work. That irritability was subdued by the blessed precept, and never aroused save when religion was assailed, or truth violated; and then it appeared like the reproving warmth of an earnest, exalted nature, loving to reform—not striving to rebuke. Robert Boyle may be said to have attained as great a degree of perfection as human nature can approach. "Religion," observes Mr. Granger, in his notice of this distinguished philosopher, "never sat more easy upon a man, nor added greater dignity to a character."

Two nephews perpetuated the fame of this truly noble family. One of these, Charles Earl of Orrery, was the reputed inventor of the instrument which bears his name, but the credit of which, as Dr. Alured Clarke, in a letter to Mrs. Clayton, observes, was not due to that nobleman. Concerning the origin of the Orrery, two contending accounts have been confidently stated.

"The whole merit of inventing it belongs," says Dr. Johnson, "to Rowley, a mathematician of Litchfield."* In the index of the first edition of the Biographia Britannica, under the word "Orrery," it is, however, stated, that the astronomical instrument called by that name was contrived by Palian the astronomer, who gave it the name of his patron. The testimony of Dr. Alured Clarke, a contemporary man of science, may here be fairly adduced, at all events, in favour of the opinion prevailing in his day, that Rowley was its inventor.

Charles, Earl of Orrery, evinced the same emulation to shine in philosophy and in letters, as his predecessors. It is, in fact, almost humiliating to reflect on the degeneracy of the nobility in our own times, in this honourable ambition. Neither wealth, nor fashion, nor even success in arms, was, in the seventeenth century, considered sufficient to complete the characteristics of an English nobleman, unless a taste for poetry, or an attempt at dramatic composition, or a large patronage of those pursuits in others, were added to the advantages of birth.

Of those who thus judged, Charles, Earl of

* Index, vol. ii., Supplement to Swift's Works.

Orrery, was one of the most amiable and the most admired. In his early youth, after being entered at fifteen as a nobleman at Christ Church, Oxford, he was so keen in the acquisition of knowledge, that his friends feared lest his health might suffer. He was placed under the tuition of Dr. Francis Atterbury, and of Dr. Friend; and for his use, Dr. Aldrich, then Dean of Christ Church, composed his learned compendium of logic, in which he styles Lord Orrery the great ornament of our college. At the age of nineteen, he edited and published a new edition of the Epistles of Phalaris, a work which led to a long and serious controversy. On quitting college, Lord Orrery entered on the great stage of public life; his first step being a duel fought with Mr. Wortley, his opponent in an election at Huntingdon. The combatants fought with swords near Grosvenor Gate, Hyde Park, and Mr. Wortley lost so much blood that he did not long survive the encounter.

Lord Orrery distinguished himself in arms—he fought under Marlborough; he was also envoy for Queen Anne to the States of Brabant and Flanders, and for his public services was raised to the dignity of a British Peer by the title of Lord Boyle, Baron of Marston. For some time, after the accession of George I., he continued to enjoy royal

favour; but upon the discovery of what was called Layer's Plot, in 1722, he was, as it appeared, most unjustly imprisoned in the Tower. The Habeas Corpus was, at that time, suspended for a year, and the Earl languished in prison, although no grounds of prosecution against him could be found; until, upon the certificate and application of Dr. Mead, he was released on bail. Lord Orrery's health was greatly impaired by his confinement, which he survived, nevertheless, some years. He died, at last, suddenly, in the fifty-sixth year of his age, leaving behind him the highest reputation for military courage, for prudence and uprightness as a statesman, and for principle as a man.

"He was happy," writes Dr. Campbell, quoting from Mr. Budgell's Memoirs of the Boyle family, "in the general esteem of his country, and in the particular affection borne him by his friends." Can there be a greater happiness than such a condition? Warm in his friendships, we are told that there was "one proof of coldness in his nature;" this, strange to say, was, that he not only forgave, but forgot injuries, and never revenged them otherwise than by rendering unexpected services to those from whom he had received them. The last days of this nobleman's life were solaced, after the indignity of unjust sus-

picions and confinement, by philosophical pursuits.

When Lord Orrery was carried a prisoner to the Tower, his son, Lord Boyle, then a youth of fifteen, earnestly entreated to be allowed to accompany his father. This was refused, but the ardent affection of the son for the parent grew with his growth. Educated by the poet Fenton, the author of Marianne, the young Lord Boyle became a worthy representative of a dignified race. By his mother's side, he was descended from the Cecils, Earls of Exeter. One of the most pleasing traits of his early character was his attachment for his tutor, Fenton. When he referred to him, after his death, he melted into tears, and spoke of him as "one of the worthiest and modestest men that ever adorned the court of Apollo."

A severe misfortune darkened the period of his youth. At the age of twenty-one, he married Lady Harriet Hamilton, the daughter of the Earl of Orkney. Although his choice, as far as that lady was concerned, met with the approbation of his father, yet a dissension arose between the two Earls, which placed Lord Boyle in a situation of great difficulty. He loved his young wife tenderly, and he venerated his father. But Lord Orrery, irritated by the quarrel, could not, at first,

see Lord Boyle's conduct in the right point of view. Eventually, however, this coolness gave place to reason; the father forgave his son the marriage with Lord Orkney's daughter; and, a reconciliation taking place, his warm affections to his son were renewed. During the short interval before the Earl's death, he could scarcely bear to be an instant separated from him. That event was unexpected, and afterwards a disclosure took place which nearly broke the heart of Lord Boyle, then Earl of Orrery. During the quarrel, his father had made a will, bequeathing to Christ Church College his valuable library, consisting of 10,000 volumes, and a large collection of mathematical instruments. The only exceptions in favour of Lord Boyle were of such works as related to English history. After his reconciliation with his son, Lord Orrery wished to revoke that will; he sent for his lawyer, but death prevented his fulfilling that intention. His son, upon the discovery of this disposition of his father's fortune, behaved with the utmost delicacy and generosity. He discharged his father's debts, instead of suffering his effects to be sold for that purpose; he paid all the legacies, and sent the books and instruments to Christ Church within the appointed time. But the blow was severe—a

fit of illness succeeded, which drove him to Bath. Whilst there, he sent these lines to a friend, who advised him to dispel his grief by poetry:

"Nor Bath, nor Tunbridge can my lays inspire,
Nor radiant beauty make me strike the lyre.
Far from the busy crowd I sit forlorn,
And sigh in secret, and in silence mourn,
Nor of my anguish ever find an end:
I weep a father, but I've lost a friend."

The duties of public life served to restore the mind thus wounded; but, in 1732, the lady, for whom Lord Orrery had suffered so much, expired. The Earl mourned her loss, according to the fashion of the day, in verse, and found in the society of the celebrated Mrs. Rowe, a solace. In her Letter to him from the Dead to the Living, she refers to his having charged her with a message "to his Harriet, when she met her gentle spirit in the blissful regions." The sorrowing widower was, after six years, consoled by an union with Mrs. Margaret Hamilton, an Irish lady; and the Earl, with gratitude to Heaven, acknowledged that the loss of his former Countess was repaired.

During some years, Lord Orrery resided in a small house in Duke-street, Westminster, that he might be with his two sons, then at Westminster

School. He afterwards retired to Caledon, in Ireland, his wife's native place, and devoted himself to letters. When the Lives of his Ancestors appeared in the Biographia Britannica, he thanked Dr. Campbell, in the name of all the Boyles, "for the honour he had done to them, and to his own judgment, by placing the family in such a light as to give a spirit of emulation to those who were hereafter to inherit the title." How just and beautiful a commentary upon the history of these *true* noblemen!

Equally beautiful, equally just, was Lord Orrery's remark upon domestic tranquillity. "Whenever," he wrote, "we step out of domestic life in search of felicity, we come back again, disappointed, tired, and chagrined. One day passed under our own roof, with our friends and our family, is worth a thousand in any other place. The noise and bustle, or, as they are foolishly called, the diversions of life, are despicable and tasteless when once we have experienced the real delight of a fireside."

Various literary labours occupied the leisure of this well-judging man. He re-published the dramatic works of his grandfather, and he gave to the world the state letters of his great grandfather, the first Earl. His winter evenings were

employed in making translations, and in writing an Essay addressed to his son, Lord Boyle. He published, in 1750-1, his "Remarks on the Life and Writings of Dean Swift," with whom he had formed an intimate acquaintance. The portraiture which he drew of that able, bad man, was unhappily too faithful; and Lord Orrery has incurred many strictures for exposing the defects of the Dean's character; yet it may be urged, in extenuation of what has been deemed a breach of friendship, that he has done ample justice to his virtues.

Many were the works, and many the literary projects, begun and completed by Lord Orrery. Among his occasional flights of fancy, were contributions to the "World"—"that bow of Ulysses," as it was called, "in which it was the fashion for men of rank and genius to try their strength." During his travels in Italy, Lord Orrery collected materials for a History of Tuscany in letters—twelve of these were finished. His constant studies were mournfully interrupted by the death of his second wife in 1758. This lady expired at Knightsbridge, whither she was removed, at her own request, a few days before her death, from Marlborough, where Lord Orrery had just taken a house, in which, she feared he would not reside

if her decease took place there. She is described as having had taste, spirit, and politeness, which might become a palace—to have been dignified without pride, good humoured without folly, witty without satire, and charitable without ostentation. Her husband survived her six years—another severe affliction, the death of his eldest son, Lord Dungarvan, saddening his own decline.

The following letter will be, perhaps, better understood, after the preceding sketch of the Boyle family:—

THE REV. DR. ALURED CLARKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Honoured Madam,

Having been two or three days at my parish, I made a visit to Lord Lymington's, where I met a new book of Mr. Budgel's, called, "Memoirs of the Family of the Boyles," with a particular account of the last Lord Orrery. It is very improbable that you should not have seen it; however, I dare say, the mention of some particulars I took notice of, will engage you an hour's reading. It is wrote, as all his pieces are, with a great mixture of folly and just observations, and of sprightly, short turns, amidst a tedious particularity on things that are worth no notice. But there are many things that are proofs of the

most vile and profligate mind with regard to political principles; for all his Whiggism is turned into downright Jacobitism; and the imaginary ill usage he had from Sir Robert draws many impertinent reflections, for the sake of which I am apt to think he now and then coins facts.

One of his remarks is, that Queen Elizabeth never refused an audience to the meanest of her subjects, to which all her great successes were owing. In another place, he says, that Lord Burleigh, or Sir Robert Cecil, (I forget which,) called Mr. Boyle, the first of the family, one morning by seven o'clock, to go to the Queen, though they had not been a-bed above five hours; on which he whimsically observes, that the ill conduct of our affairs is chiefly owing to great men's lying a-bed in a morning.

One of this Mr. Boyle's sons was the first Lord Orrery, who, in King Charles the Second's time, was against the Exclusion Bill, but very zealous in promoting expedients to tie up a Popish successor's hands, which, says our author, would have preserved King James in his governments, and saved an infinite expense of blood and treasure, that have since been expended to support the Revolution. Such a reflection as this from Mr. Addison's nephew, and one that has professed so much zeal, and received so much money from a Revolution government, is hardly to be borne, not even from the consideration of the

present necessity he has reduced himself to by his indiscretion and his vanity.

There are two or three pretty things said of Cromwell, which give one an idea of his generosity of spirit, which history is silent about. In his account of Mr. Boyle, the philosopher, he has given an extract from his theological works—of the absurdity of talking freely of the attributes of God, which may give the reader some idea of his piety, but none of his judgment or understanding. There is something pretty remarkable of the occasion of Mr. Addison's writing the "Campaigne." Lord Godolphin wanted a poet, and Lord Hallifax said he could furnish him with one; but that merit was so much neglected by men of power, that it was worth no distinguished person's while to bestow his time upon them. This made the Treasurer more eager, and Lord Hallifax procured good terms for Mr. Addison, and engaged him in the work.

He is very particular in his account of the dispute between the late Lord Orrery and Dr. Bentley, and has published some entertaining epistles of Phalaris. He banters Layer's plot in a very impudent manner, and ascribes Dr. Friend's imprisonment to the malice of the first Minister, and a speech he made in the House a few days before. He makes the machine, called the Orrery, to be an instance of the last Lord Orrery's mechanical genius, in which he must be mistaken; because Rowley, the maker, told me my

Lord had no other concern in it than in buying the first that was made, and used to take it, that the name of Orrery was given to it. It seems Bishop Atterbury was the Lord's tutor; and Budgel has given us a remarkable letter of the Bishop's to his father, when he was at Oxford, and not thirty years old, in which there is an expression to this purpose:—"I am sure I was made for another scene, and another kind of conversation, though it has been my hard fortune to be pinned down to this." Budgel represents himself as in a state of great intimacy with my Lord Orrery, which will lead other people to make some natural reflections on the Lord's character, which Budgel could never intend his readers should make.

If, after all, you have read the book, this will come to you in the shape of an impertinence, but otherwise it may tempt you to look into it. However it be, you will be so good as to excuse my barrenness of other entertainments, which I will endeavour to supply as well as I can.

I am, in the most earnest manner,

Ever honoured Madam,

Your most obedient

humble servant,

A. Clarke.

This letter is dated from Hurtsbourne Park, near Andover, the seat of Lord Lymington.

THE REV. DR. ALURED CLARKE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Hurtsbourne, Oct. 5, 1731.

MOST HONOURED MADAM,

I hope you have been so good as to conclude I could not have been silent a fortnight together, if I had been in a condition to write; for, indeed, I have been so disordered in my nerves, together with a continued hectic indisposition, that I have been able to attend to nothing but the care of my health, which I am not apt to employ my thoughts about when I am tolerably well. But by the kindness of my good friends here, I hope I shall soon be able to wait upon you without the necessity of undertaking a Bath journey. I was very much concerned I could not meet the Bishop of Sarum in his passage through this country, but hope he has laid in a stock of health and spirit for the winter.

I have seen a pamphlet, called "Divine Benevolence," and printed for J. Noon, lately published on occasion of a pamphlet last winter by Mr. Bayle, with the title of "Divine Rectitude," about which we had a good deal of talk; and as it is pretty much in the way of reading that you like, I dare say you will be pleased with this pamphlet, if you are at leisure enough to look it over.

If the five tickets you were so kind to order me be lodged in any office for me, I beg you would please to take them into your own custody, till I

have an opportunity of receiving them from you, because my brother is not in town, nor anybody that I can employ for that purpose.

I can only add my best wishes of health and prosperity to my best friends, and I am always, with the utmost zeal,

Honoured Madam,

Your most devoted

humble servant,

A. CLARKE.

CHAPTER XIII.

Mrs. Clayton's female correspondents—Ceremony at Court—An agreeable match—Advantages of remaining in the country in bad weather—A self-invited guest—Dr. Sacheverel the hero of the mob—An audience of the Queen—Lady Falmouth soliciting the post of Lady of the Bedchamber—She proposes that Mrs. Clayton shall *expostulate* with the Queen in her favour—Lady Mary Powlett—The Countess Granville's recommendation of her cousin for the place of Bedchamber-woman—Duchesses of Bolton—A little embarrassment caused by a Royal visit—An important postscript—Countess Cowper's secret interview with the Princess—Witnesses at a Royal birth—Court gossip—Lord Chancellor Cowper—Sudden death of a Minister—Decease of the Duke of Marlborough—Belsize House—Lord Radnor and his Christmas-box.

CHAPTER XIII.

As may readily be supposed, the majority of Mrs. Clayton's correspondents were ladies; they were too, in general, either ladies of the Court, or were very anxious to become so, and will be found to have been members of the first families in the kingdom. The present chapter is a miscellaneous collection, arranged according to dates, where such can be ascertained, and when not dated, we have placed them in that part of the series to which the internal evidence indicates that they should belong.

The writer of the following communication was Jemima, eldest daughter of Thomas Lord Crewe, and first wife of Henry Grey, Duke of Kent; her letters occur frequently in this collection, but very few of them are of any public interest.

THE DUCHESS OF KENT TO MRS. CLAYTON.

I am too little skilled in ceremony to venture to direct myself, (without desiring your opinion,) dear Madam, whether it is proper for me to wait upon the Princess* at her own apartments, before

* Queen Caroline, then Princess of Wales.

I see her at the drawing-room; be so good to tell me what you think right upon this article, and indulge me the great inclination I have to count upon you, and consult you as a friend. I desire of all things to pay all possible duty and respect to her Highness, but not be what she should think ridiculous; and there is nobody can direct me so well in that as yourself. If you think I ought to wait upon her, I beg you will appoint the hour, and if possible let me go with you. Forgive me this trouble, since it is impossible to be with greater truth and respect,

Your most obedient
humble servant,
J. KENT.

The nobleman referred to by the Duchess in her next favour, was John, third Lord Ashburnham, in 1728, Gentleman of the Bedchamber to Frederick, Prince of Wales, who married her daughter, Jemima, the young lady being his Lordship's third wife. "Little Mary" was her Grace's youngest daughter, who married Dr. Gregory, Dean of Christchurch.

DUCHESS OF KENT TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Wrest House, Dec. 8, 1723.

Having had Mr. Hutton's good company with us, the long evenings have passed off very well, by the assistance of Bishop Burnet, but that does not hinder my wishing extremely to spend some of them in yet better company, in Cleveland Court,

and it will not now be long before we shall leave the country, which grows very cold, though hitherto the season has been very favourable, and I have often walked out, without getting cold.

I am in hopes to have one business this winter, which will indeed be a very agreeable one, which is to marry Jemima; the person is Lord Ashburnham. One can have nothing in this world made on purpose, and, take this altogether, I am very well pleased with it, but as yet it is not a certain thing; forms of law must pass, and if I were in town, I would not own it, and wish, for other reasons, it might be a secret longer than I believe it will. The kindness and friendship which you show to myself and my daughter assure me of your satisfaction in everything I wish and count a happiness: the persuasion of this is really one to me, and prized as highly as it deserves.

You mention little Mary in so kind a manner, that I cannot help making her compliments to you; she grows a fat girl, and is very well. I should disown my girls, if they were wanting in any respect to you, dear Madam, when their mother is, with so much affection and truth,

Your most faithful humble servant,

J. KENT.

My Lord and Mr. Hatton make their compliments. I am always Mrs. Clayton's humble servant.

The Duchess, in a letter, not of sufficient interest to print, had complained of failing eyesight,

which led her correspondent to forward her a light-shade, such as was used by her Royal mistress. It is for this service her Grace so warmly expresses her thanks.

DUCHESS OF KENT TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Wrest House, Jan. 23, 1726.

By the assistance I receive from the pretty convenient machine which you have been so good to contrive for me, I am able to see to thank you for it, which otherwise I could not do at this time, for the very cold wet weather finds me out, even by the chimney-corner, and has given me a great share of headach, so that I cannot, by any means bear the light, and I feel myself sincerely obliged to you, dear Madam, for the singular service I find from it.

I am very sensible how kind it is in you, who are out of the way of seeing how dismal a place the country is at this time, (by the frequent floods and the other consequences of the great snow and continual rains,) to feel for your friends that are in the midst of it. It is indeed terrible to hear the calamities it brings upon every creature: the men and women are miserable in their way, and even the male part of the creation suffer in theirs; but I have this consolation, that though the being in the country at such a time cannot be but unpleasant and hardly good for oneself, yet it makes one acquainted with a part of life very proper to be known, and gives one the advantage of being more

useful in one's station. I ought not to be making my reflections to you, but be glad to take yours, whenever you are so good as to lay any in my way.

I sincerely rejoice to hear that Prince William* is out of danger, and the Princess, of course, out of pain: she that, in the midst of so much deserved happiness, can feel a concern and compassion for them that want it in any degree, has surely a just title to the highest respect and most sincere good wishes, and this I constantly pay her: if it is not improper or forward, (for I leave that to you,) you will oblige me in making my compliments to her upon this occasion.

I have the greatest satisfaction imaginable, in the persuasion I have of Mr. Clayton's friendship and goodwill, and think it a very particular mark of it, that you would both be so good as to receive me under your roof. My wish could not frame a passing my time more desirably than I am very sure I should do there, for many reasons; but it would spoil me, and give me such a taste of ease, that I should not know how to struggle with domestic perplexities, when I was to return to them again; but the principal pleasure I propose to myself, in going to town, is to pass as much time as you will give me leave in your company, a little to make myself amends for what I have lost. I am not certain when I shall leave this place; my sister Harpur offers me her house, but the roads are so bad, I dread the thoughts of a journey.

* William, Duke of Cumberland.

I ought to make a great many excuses for this tedious letter, but it is like my visits, for you know I never can get away; but you are so good, that you, I dare say, will place it to the great esteem and regard with which I am,

Dear Madam,

Your most faithful

humble servant,

J. KENT.

We have here some curious particulars respecting that mob idol of the last century, Dr. Sacheverell, with whose name every historical reader must be familiar.

DUCHESS OF KENT TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Wednesday night.

The King's birthday was observed here according to custom—by one sort of people with a ball, many new clothes, &c., and the day after with oak boughs, green and white favours, a ball, great ringing of bells, &c; many of that party went out of town on the birthday. The only thing remarkable is the constancy of the mob to their hero, Dr. Sacheverell, who is followed as much as ever, and if he liked it, might be worshipped. You know the great Church—when he preaches, the whole body of our part of the Church, nay, even the church-yard, is crowded, so as to be impassable during the service; nay, if he reads prayers

only, it is full an hour before they begin; to say the truth, he does not seem to promote it.

You have been very obliging, in making my excuses to the Princess; and she does me a great deal of honour in receiving them favourably. The people of this place have great expectations of her coming here next season. I must confess, I join my wishes with theirs, for I have great faith in the matter. I have no mercy upon your head and eyes; but you know I am apt to forget myself in your company, and you will therefore be indulgent to,

Dear Madam,

Your most obedient humble servant,

J. Kent.

Jemima is very desirable of your favour in remembering her; poor girl, she has still the colic.

It seems that the highest of the nobility were in the habit of applying to Mrs. Clayton, when they desired audiences with the Queen. The Duke of Kent was at this time Lord-Lieutenant of the County of Bedford, and custos rotulorum, and possessed considerable political influence.

DUCHESS OF KENT TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Sunday night.

Dear Madam,

The Duke of Kent is desirous of an audience of the Queen, and begs that you will be so obliging

as to procure him that honour; he did desire to have waited on you himself to-night, but I prevented him, by telling him you were abroad; and he has had his Bedfordshire people with him. I believe Mr. Bing and Sir Rowland Allstone will declare for the county.

My Lord is as sensible as myself of your constant favour and friendship, and hopes you will not question the value he sets upon it. For my own part, I love and value you in the greatest degree, and am most entirely

Your obliged and obedient servant,

J. KENT.

The writer of the following notes bore the relation of niece to the Duke of Marlborough. Before her marriage with Viscount Falmouth, 23rd April, 1700, she was Charlotte Godfrey, the eldest daughter of Colonel Godfrey, by Arabella Churchill, who, before her marriage, was mistress to James the Second, and mother, by that monarch, of James Fitz James, Duke of Berwick.

VISCOUNTESS FALMOUTH TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Sunday night.

DEAR MRS. CLAYTON,

I have just been in company where Lady Diana Spencer said that the Duchess of Bedford is to be a Lady of the Bedchamber; if so, the

Queen will add some new ones, and as you have been so good to me already, I hope you will pardon my pressing you, dear Madam, to use your interest for me upon this occasion, as you know I depend upon you alone, and resolve to owe it wholly to you. If I have the good fortune to succeed, which I have so set my heart upon that I will persist for ever, and as long as I live, both my Lord and myself will be proud to show our gratitude to dear Mrs. Clayton, for whose friendship I have the greatest value and esteem,

And am, with great truth,

Your most sincere humble servant,

C. FALMOUTH.

On the back of this letter is the following curious indorsement:—"She* offered Mrs. Clayton a handful of bank bills, for which reason she never spoke more for her. She got her Lord continued in a place of 3000*l.* a year, for which reason he was wise enough not to offer anything."

VISCOUNTESS FALMOUTH TO MRS. CLAYTON.

July 1, Saturday noon.

MADAM,

After I came away from you last night, I heard that the Queen would add some new ladies, and you, dear Madam, having already shown so much goodness and generosity to me, and know-

* Lady Falmouth.

ing the state of my affairs, you will not wonder if I press dear Mrs. Clayton to expostulate with the Queen upon this occasion, and lay before her the vast obligation it would be to Lord Falmouth, and if he could be happy enough to go into the country with this mark of favour, it would be such a countenance to his interest at the next Elections, that I may without vanity say, that there is not one subject in England that can do half the service; but this has been so explained already, that I need not trouble you, dear Madam, with it again, and it is impossible for anybody to be more entirely devoted to both their Majesties' service than he is. I own to you, I have been in such anxiety of mind, that I have not slept one wink all night; and all my hopes now are, that there is no law to fix what number of ladies the Queen shall have; so that it is still in her power to make me happy. If she breaks into her design of having no more, she may as reasonably add two as one, upon coming to the Crown; and as the same occasion will not happen again, it cannot be a precedent for anybody else; and I have so long pleased myself with the encouragement I had to hope, that I shall be miserable if I should now fail, which, I think, is almost impossible, knowing the Queen's great soul. Sure she would not have given me such strong assurances, (I dare not call it a promise,) after the two to whom she was then engaged; but it was so express, that I made no doubt but my turn was next, insomuch

that I thought it my duty to ask to kiss her hand upon it, which I should not have dared to have done, had I not looked upon it as equal to a promise; and I am still convinced I shall succeed, if dear Mrs. Clayton will continue her goodness and exert herself in my behalf. I beg ten thousand pardons for giving you this trouble, and shall ever have the gratefullest sense of dear Mrs. Clayton's friendship.

And I am, Madam,
With the greatest esteem,
Your obliged humble servant,
C. FALMOUTH.

Katherine, the Lady of Lord Harry Powlett, or Paulet, brother to Charles, third Duke of Bolton, whom he succeeded in the title in 1754, was the writer of the three next notes. It is evident that she had some expectations for her husband from Sir Robert Walpole, nor were they disappointed, as is acknowledged in the second letter, when, according to a memorandum on the back, his Lordship had just been made one of the Lords of the Admiralty.

LADY POWLETT TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Sunday, five o'clock.

MADAM,

My Lord has never heard one word of Sir Robert; we are in great pain about it, and beg to

know if you think it proper that my Lord should write to him, or wait upon him, as he told him he would give him an answer in two or three days. We cannot stir a step without your advice, to whose friendship we owe all the favours we expect to receive. I dare not come near you, which is no small mortification to

Your most faithful and obliged
humble servant,
K. Powlett.

LADY POWLETT TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Tuesday night.

Madam,

My Lord was this day to wait on Sir Robert, who told him he should have the thing he desired, but made no mention of any other person. Gratitude obliges me to return you both our thanks in this manner, since you will not permit us to make any public acknowledgment of your favours; but I hope you will not long debar me from the pleasure of waiting on you, to acknowledge the great obligations you have laid upon

Your most faithful
humble servant,
K. Powlett.

LADY POWLETT TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Lindhurst, in the New Forest, Oct. 10.

Madam,

The great favours my Lord and I have received from you, gives me hopes that you will

not think me very impertinent in asking your advice in an affair of which nobody can be so good a judge as yourself. I am sure I know no person living whose judgment I should so soon rely upon in anything of the greatest importance; but this is only to know whether you think it necessary that either my Lord or I, or both of us, should come up to the birthday, for our desire is to pay the utmost duty and regard to the King and Queen, and to show that we are not ungrateful for the late honours they have bestowed upon my Lord.

But now give me leave to tell you how our case stands, and what it is puts us under any difficulty in attending at his Majesty's birthday. My Lord has been randing these five weeks, but often returned to Lord Lymington's, which is his head-quarters, and where I have been all the time. He is now in the Isle of Wight, but I expect him to-morrow, and then we go to Edinton for a few days, where I hope to have the honour to hear from you, and accordingly we shall take our route either to London or else into the upper part of Hampshire, to Horton Powletts, near Winchester, for all that part of the country my Lord has still to rand.*

My Lord has taken a great deal of pains, and had vast success; but it is no small trouble to retrieve the interest of a county almost lost: the task would have been very hard, had we had any

* An electioneering term.

other man but Lord Lymington to have supported us; but the perfect harmony that is between my Lord and him, makes everything go with ease and pleasure. The Whig gentlemen act now with vigour and resolution, and there seems to be a point in the county entirely to our advantage, and I am in great hopes we shall quite defeat the designs of our enemies.

Lady Herbert is so good as to carry this letter for me, and I imagine she brings the compliments of Lord and Lady Lymington; so I will hasten to conclude with only my own good wishes, which are, that you may ever meet with that sincerity and gratitude from all you have obliged, as you ever will do from

Your most humble servant,

K. Powlett.

Please to direct for me at Edinton, in Wiltshire, by Hungerford Bag.

The letter which follows was evidently written previously to the marriage of Prince Frederick, and has this memorandum on the back: "Mrs. Clayton got her niece, Carteret, Maid of Honour." The writer was Lady Grace Granville, youngest daughter of John Earl of Bath, married to George Baron Carteret, who died in 1695. She survived him till 1744, and being co-heiress to the great Bath estates, on the decease of her nephew, William Henry Granville, Earl of Bath, in 1711, when the title became extinct, she was

created on the 1st of January, 1714, Viscountess Carteret and Countess Granville. The niece mentioned in the memorandum appears to have been the unfortunate Lady Sophia Fermor, who died shortly after her union with John, second Lord Carteret, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in 1724.

COUNTESS GRANVILLE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Saturday morning.

The uncertainty of the happiness of seeing dear Mrs. Clayton makes me set pen to paper, since common fame says we shall soon have a Princess of Wales, and my cousin Pendarvis presses me to recommend her to your favour, for a Bed-Chamber Woman in that Court. Pray give me leave to send her to wait on you. I know your generous heart inclines you to do good, and I can answer for my relation that she will do you credit; her mind is full as well to be liked as her person. She was married at seventeen to a drunken monster, whom she behaved to without a fault, and since she has been a widow has made appear as right a conduct. In short, she is every way qualified for the station I desire for her. Your making me a Maid of Honour, in the handsomest manner in the world, encourages me to hope you will make now a Bed-Chamber Woman to the Princess of Wales at my request. Do not send me a letter of excuse, for it will break my heart. I know our gracious Queen has so good a taste, as to distinguish Mrs. Clayton with

her ear and favour, which gives me true satisfaction, for I had rather be obliged to her than anybody. If I should have success, the Queen's goodness, I believe, will work a miracle on me; make my blood circulate so right, as to restore me to my strength and limbs.

I am, dear Madam,
Your affectionate, humble,
and obedient servant,
GRANVILLE.

We now introduce two Duchesses of Bolton, neither of whom, however, was the representative of Polly Peachum; the first being Henrietta, daughter of the unfortunate Duke of Monmouth, the third wife of the second Duke of Bolton, and Lady of the Bedchamber to Caroline, Princess of Wales; the other was Anne, daughter of John, Earl of Carberry, and first wife of the husband of the celebrated actress, Lavinia Fenton, Charles, third Duke, Constable of the Tower, who died in 1754.

HENRIETTA, DUCHESS OF BOLTON, TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Saturday noon.

As you have always been very good and obliging to me, it encourages me, Madam, to beg a favour of you, which is, that you will have the goodness to intercede with Mr. Clayton, for a near relation of mine to be a land-waiter, and that if there should not be a vacancy at present, that he will only let him be minuted down for the

next, which I shall ever own as a particular favour done to your faithful, humble servant,

H. Bolton.

ANNE, DUCHESS OF BOLTON, TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Wednesday morning.

Madam,

I am afraid you will think me very troublesome, which is making a very ill return for all your favours to me, but it is the high opinion I have of your judgment, and the assurance I have of your kind wishes for me, that encourages me to take the liberty with you; and therefore, I hope you will pardon me, and be so good to let me know what time I may wait on you and find you alone, for I have something which I beg leave to say to you concerning my troublesome affair, which does not go on so smooth as I once hoped it would, for there are now such difficulties laid in my way, as I fear I shall not be able to get over. If this afternoon, between five and six o'clock, is a proper time, I will wait on you then, but if you are any other way engaged, I beg you will be so good to appoint any hour, either to-morrow or next day, when it will be least inconvenient to yourself for me to have the pleasure of waiting on you. Madam, I cannot conclude this without assuring you that none whom you have honoured with your intimacy and friendship can be more proud of it, nor set a higher value upon it, than,

Madam,

Your most faithful, humble servant,

A. Bolton.

The wife of a Lord Chancellor is so important a personage, that we have found it necessary to devote nearly a whole chapter to her. The lady to whom we are now referring, was second wife of Lord Chancellor Cowper. She was Mary, daughter of John Clavering, Esq., of Chopwell, in Durham, one of the earliest of Mrs. Clayton's correspondents, and a coadjutrix in the service of the Princess of Wales. Both Lord and Lady Cowper were highly esteemed by the Royal Family, and a promise on the part of the Princess to honour them with a visit, appears to have occasioned some little embarrassment to her Ladyship.

The "calico bed a-making" forms a curious feature in Lady Cowper's calculations upon so marked a distinction. Very few of her letters are dated, but they commence about the year 1718. The following epistle was written from Coln Green, the ancient seat of the Cowper family, at a little distance to the north-west of Pansanger, their present residence. The house at Coln Green was erected by William, the first Earl Cowper, who was advanced to that dignity by George the First, in 1718. He was Lord Chancellor in Queen Anne's reign. During the reign of George the First, Lord Cowper sided with George the Second, then Prince of Wales, against his father, and resigned his Chancellorship. The house at Coln Green was taken down in the time of the fourth Earl Cowper, and Pansanger built in its stead.

COUNTESS COWPER TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Coln Green, May 31.

Dear Madam,

I have had so many country visits to return, since my Lord came home, that I have not had time to thank you for your kind letter. I did hope, indeed, to see you the end of this week, but since I am disappointed, I can fix no time for coming to London, and must content myself with this way of inquiring after your health. I am very glad to hear from the newspapers that the King has declared he will not go abroad. I hope it will have a very good effect. The King's birth-day was very much celebrated by ringing of bells, bonfires, and drinking, consequently, &c., here, and in all the parishes hereabouts but Hatfield, where the bells, they say, were dumb till the 29th; but I have this last from no very good authority, and so only send it you as a hearsay. We hear great wonders of the rejoicings in the Camp, which has made a great talk in this country. I thank God we hear no more of the plot.* Pray be so good to send me word when the Prince and Princess go to Richmond. She was so gracious to tell my Lord, she would honour us with coming hither, but having set no time, I must beg the favour of you to let me know when it will be, if you can learn it without trouble, for I have a calico bed a-making, and should be glad to have it up before her Royal Highness honours this

* Most likely some Jacobite movement; as, between 1715 and 1722, perpetual schemes were set on foot.

place with her presence; besides, you know how difficult everything is to be got here, so I should be glad to be provided. And (if the Princess does not change her mind) I should be glad to know of you how many people the Princess brings usually with her, and what sort. You will pardon this trouble, which the desire of doing my duty brings upon you.

I am very glad to find, by my Lord, that Mr. Clayton is so much recovered; he has not only my good wishes for his health and welfare, but also, I verily believe, those of the greatest part of the kingdom. I rejoice with you in particular that he is so well, for, indeed, I could hardly hope ever to hear he was so well again as he is. I fancy the air the best thing for him, for nothing recovers strength like it. My Lord told me you talked of going to Luton; I wish you would make this your resting-place in your journey, for it is too far at once; and a little time in Hertfordshire would enable him to go on the rest without hazard, or at least, I, that wish to see you both, fancy so. I am, with the greatest respect and truth,

Dear Madam,

Your most faithful, humble servant,

M. Cowper.

My service, pray, to Mr. Clayton. My Lord is both your humble servants.

The indorsement of the foregoing letter, "Just before the quarrel," (of George the First and his Heir,) marks the date of the next letter, which will be found to bear a family likeness to the bulk

of her friends' correspondence, in containing an application.

COUNTESS COWPER TO MRS. CLAYTON.

This comes to wish dear Mrs. Clayton a good journey—a pleasant one I do not need to wish you, it being hardly possible to be otherwise at the place you go to, and with the company you will have, for I reckon the Duchess of Marlborough will be there as long as you. If wishing caps were now to be had, as in the days of the fairies, I would certainly make you a visit there; as it is, I must content myself with inquiring thus after both your healths.

I have never been so weary in my life as I have been this removing. I am hardly recovered yet, but a maid going up to town, I could not slip this opportunity of inquiring after your health; besides, my Margaret, who you know I think worth her weight in gold, stands by me, and begs so hard that I would trouble you about her brother, that I cannot deny her. The Clerk of the Peace for Oxfordshire is dead, and the place, she tells me, is in the gift of my Lord Godolphin,* who, she says, she believes would willingly put her brother Edward in, if Mr. Clayton would be so good to name him to my Lord Godolphin. She fancies it would strengthen the King's and the Woodstock

* Francis, second Earl of Godolphin, who married Lady Henrietta Churchill, eldest daughter of the Duke of Marlborough, and afterwards Duchess of Marlborough in her own right.

interest; but that I do not wonder at, for people always fancy that what does them good must, of consequence, do good in everything; though, if the thing was easy to my Lord Godolphin, we are sure he is a zealous Whig. I can say no more of him, because I know nothing of him but from a fond sister; but Mr. Clayton knows him, and will do as he sees convenient in this thing, for though I cannot deny her to trouble you, yet I would not for all the world have Mr. Clayton do anything that should be uneasy to him.

I hear our dear mistress is at Hampton Court, so I hardly hope to hear how she does from you. I believe it will be about a week longer before I can wait upon her. This place is so delightful, that I cannot give her a greater demonstration how mighty well I love her, than by leaving it to wait upon her, though it is but for three or four nights.

I have got a new niece since I came down; her father-in-law and husband wait upon her to Hertford next Monday, so I suppose my time will be taken up with tarts and jellies all the beginning of the week. Shall not I hope for the consolation of one letter from my dear Mrs. Clayton? I am sure she has not a faithfuller friend in the whole world than,

Dear Madam,

Your most humble
and most obedient servant,
M. Cowper.

My Lord is your humble servant. Pray, dear Madam, present both our services to Mr. Clayton.

The allusion in the Postscript of the following note, which is indorsed "Just about the quarrel," is one of the numerous ones to money transactions of which no explanation has been allowed to transpire.

COUNTESS COWPER TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Dear Madam,

If it was not a mighty impolitic thing to chide when one is going to ask a favour, I should say a great deal of the breach of promise of four very good people, that have forgot where they were to dine this week; but, for the abovesaid reason, and the hopes that they will make amends the next week, I shall say nothing, but beg the favour of my dear Mrs. Clayton to help me to her first minister, the upholsterer, whom I want mightily to talk with, having some affairs of great importance to do in the country.

I wish you joy of Mr. Clayton's speaking in the House, and I value myself very much upon having foreseen the weight he will always have there.

I am,
with the greatest respect and esteem,
Dear Madam,
Your most faithful
humble servant,
M. Cowper.

I hope Mr. Clayton is so good to remember the 5500*l.*

The next is also "about the time of the quarrel;" which probably rendered necessary the secret interview with the Princess, to which the communication refers.

COUNTESS COWPER TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Wednesday, one o'clock.

Dear Madam,

I have made all your compliments to our dear Princess, who loves you mightily, and desires you would not come hither unless you find you can do it with safety; and she has ordered me to tell you, that if you do think of coming, she desires it may be by water, and that you would be here by nine o'clock in the morning, and if you will give her notice of the day you will come, she will meet you in the garden-house, at the end of the terrace, that nobody may see you. The Princess was last night at Kensington, and came back by water. I am called, so I can only add that I am, with the greatest esteem and truth,

Dear Madam,

Your most faithful

and most obedient servant,

M. Cowper.

"About the time the Duke was born," fixes the date of the following note, which alludes to the birth of the Duke of Cumberland, and contains a curious reference to the custom of having witnesses of the birth of a member of the Royal Family of England.

COUNTESS COWPER TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Dear Madam,

My cold is so bad this morning, that I dare not venture out to wait upon the Princess this morning, so am forced to trouble you to beg of you to present my Lord's and my most humble duty to her Royal Highness. I spoke to him last night, according to the Princess's command, about the people proper to be present at the labour; he bids me say that the Princess is at her perfect liberty in that point to do as she pleases, neither the law, nor any rule or custom, having fixed upon anybody to be present; and his humble opinion of so many people being sent for upon that occasion by King James was, that the Queen* was suspected, all along, of imposing upon the kingdom; but as he humbly thinks the Princess is suspected by nobody, of what party soever, she is at her perfect liberty to choose who she pleases to have present.

I hope to hear by the servant that the Princess is in good health.

I am,
with the greatest truth and esteem,
Dear Madam,
Your most faithful
humble servant,
M. C.

I have here inclosed the heart I promised, and

* Mary of Modena; upon the occasion of the birth of James Stuart, commonly called the Chevalier St. George.

am glad you should wear it, to put you in mind that I have another heart most faithfully at your service.

The references to Hampton Court, to the Princess's health, to the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, and to Prince Eugene's victory, may, perhaps, recommend this specimen of Court gossip to the reader.

COUNTESS COWPER TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Hampton Court, Aug. 18, 1716.

I had the pleasure of my dear Mrs. Clayton's letter here, where I have been ever since Thursday was a se'nnight, but to very little purpose, for I have been ill ever since I came here, which prevented my asking you how you do. It is an age since I saw you, and, to tell you the truth, Hampton Court is very little entertaining to me, (excepting the pleasure of being with our dear mistress,) when you are not here. You know I have very little acquaintance among them, and so I leave you to judge how I pass my time without my Lord or my family; at last, four great books are come to my relief.

The Princess has been mightily out of order. She was in great danger of miscarrying; but I thank God she is very well again. She has taken some things Sir David Hamilton gave her, and I hope she is out of danger for this time, though I wish she would take a little more care of herself.

I am mighty glad to hear by everybody that the Duke of Marlborough is so much better. I hope he will continue to drink the waters, since they agree with him. I am always pleased with the Duchess's kind remembrance of me, and I hope she is persuaded she has not a more faithful servant in the world than I am. I do not doubt but you have had a great deal of pleasure in Prince Eugene's victory. Does it not warm your heart, and make you remember other victories, which remain only now in memory, and which I can never forgive the enemies of our country for putting a stop to?

I delivered the two sermons, as your servant ordered me, from you, to do. I thank you a thousand times for the trouble you had to speak to Mr. Clayton. You saw, by my letter, I only meant it, if it had been easy or convenient to be done; and your reason is so good, that nothing could be wished for more. I long mightily to see you, for I have a whole budget of stuff for you, which would not be at all proper for a letter. Till we meet, dear Madam, adieu. I must content myself with hearing from you sometimes; and I beg you to believe me, with the truest friendship and respect,

Dear Madam,

Your most faithful humble servant,

M. Cowper.

Pray present my most humble service to the dear Duchess.

Lady Cowper appears, from the following letter, to have had some fears lest her inability to appear at Court should be construed into a mark of disrespect.

COUNTESS COWPER TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Coln Green, Oct. 20, 1720.

DEAR MADAM,

I had the favour of your letter, which, without compliment, was a very great cordial to me; but I am very much concerned to find, by my Lord, that you are not so well as you were at the Bath. I am afraid, seeing all the dismal things that happen every day, makes you worse. The accounts one hears from everybody are so terrible, that I am glad I am here, where I can only hear of the public calamity,* which must be the consequence of all this. I own I am frighted for the event. We have had a report in the country, that Mr. W. [Walpole] is immediately to be at the head of the T. [Treasury.] I suppose it has been spread to raise credit.

I guess it will not be long before the P. [Princess] leaves R. [Richmond.] I am obliged to her for the honour she did me, to express her concern for me to you. I am at present in a very dismal way, and very incapable of doing my duty in her service. She is so good to indulge me with idleness, till I am able to do my duty;

* The South Sea Bubble.

and, indeed, when one is carried up-stairs and down, it is plain there is no possibility of waiting. I had made clothes for our master's birthday. I suppose that shows enough, that I would have performed that part of my duty also, if I had been able. They talked of coming to town before that time, for the sake of your company. I doubt people will hardly be in humour to make themselves fine.

I heartily wish you, dear Madam, a perfect recovery of your health, which is the foundation of all happiness. I am, with the greatest respect and truth,

Dear Madam,

Your most faithful humble servant,

M. C.

My service, pray, to Mr. Clayton.

The minister whom Lady Cowper will not pronounce a great man, whose sudden death she records, was Charles Spencer, Earl of Sunderland.

COUNTESS COWPER TO MRS. CLAYTON.

May 1, 1722.

DEAR MADAM,

I came out of town in so great a hurry, my Lord being ill, that I could not find a moment's time to wait upon you, but I am very solicitous to hear of your and Mr. Clayton's health, so take the liberty to inquire this way after it, and heartily wish to hear that you are both perfectly recovered,

for nobody loves and respects you both more than my Lord and I do. The weather has been very cold here ever since we came down, yet notwithstanding, I thank God, the country air has quite recovered my Lord Cowper; I think I have not known him in better health than now, a good while. We were all much surprised at the sudden death of a certain minister, for I can never call him a great man, that has made a little people of a great one—having been taught that in old times. He was a great man who made answer to a person that asked him to play a tune—that he could not play, but he could make a great city of a little one. I do not find that any living soul has died for grief of his decease; on the contrary, here, people think there is now an end of South Sea's.

If you are not too much employed about Mr. Clayton, I hope you will be so good to let me hear from you. I am with the greatest esteem and respect,

Dear Madam,

Your most faithful, humble servant,

M. C.

My service to Mr. Clayton; my Lord presents his to you both.

The Countess is evidently better satisfied with the claims of another great man, John, Duke of Marlborough, whose loss she here so forcibly deplores. Belsize, referred to in another paragraph, was a public place of entertainment, with

tea-gardens, at Hampstead, much frequented by the gay world at this period. The hope expressed in the last line is curious.

COUNTESS COWPER TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Thursday, June 21, 1722.

DEAR MADAM,

Though I am not sure where you are, yet I venture to write to you, hoping it will be sent to you wherever you are. I cannot forbear this opportunity of condoling with you upon the loss of your friend the Duke of Marlborough, whose memory must ever be had in the highest esteem by every Englishman that values his country, for whom the Duke did so great things, that posterity will hardly credit what he has done, or that his humanity could equal his success; in that, a hero, very different from the Alexanders of antiquity, or the Kings of S . . . .* of our time, who by their ferocity may be properly said to be sent into the world in wrath.

I see, by the prints, that Mr. Churchill is come again. I am a little hard of belief about your inference in your last letter; it was a saying of somebody, *the less you believe, and the less you are cheated,* —which I have found sometimes a very proper sentence to remember; but I will tell you more of my mind when I can do it without a third body being let into the secret, for I do not suppose you

* Probably Sweden. There is an hiatus here in Lady Cowper's MS.

will be the first that reads this letter. The prints tell us my Lord Cadogan is to have the Duke of Marlborough's employments: pray is it true?

We are very dull here this summer; for there have been so many deaths in this neighbourhood, among the gay part of it, that we have no sort of diversion. The man that keeps Belsize is setting up a long room at North Hall, and his music plays from sunrise to sunsetting, but vainly, for nobody here care to go to him, especially since they heard he intended to have forty beds for the accommodation of gentlemen and ladies from London. I hoped to have had the pleasure of seeing you in town before now, but have been prevented; however, I intend the first opportunity I can, to go thither, in order to go to Richmond to pay my duty, and I hope I shall find you in one of the two places. I hear from London that the Princess is again with child, but not from Richmond. I hope it is true; we cannot have too many.

I hope Mr. Clayton is perfectly recovered of all his complaints, and that you both are in a good state of health. I am afraid the melancholy of the Duchess of Marlborough should affect your health, for I know you are so good a friend, that you must needs be affected with so great a loss; however, I hope you will take the best care you can of yourself, and live many years to read Greek, with

Your most faithful
humble servant,
M. C.

My Lord presents you and Mr. Clayton with his most humble service. Pray, my service to Mr. Clayton.

I do not case my letter, because it does not deserve double postage. Sir Godfrey Kneller being recovered, and I fearing a relapse for him, you will pardon my putting you in mind of your picture.

The Lord Radnor mentioned in the following note was most probably Charles Bodville Robartes, second Earl of that family, who died in 1723; the Lady Essex was Lady Jane Hyde, eldest surviving daughter of Henry Earl of Clarendon, married to William, the second Earl; and the Duchess of Shrewsbury must have been the wife of the statesman, who was raised to the Ducal title in 1694, which dignity expired with him, in 1717.

COUNTESS COWPER TO MRS. CLAYTON.

I am very unfortunate to be hindered of the pleasure of seeing my dear Mrs. Clayton to-morrow, but I hope you will be so good to let me hear from you as soon as you come back. I came last night from London, and the day before from Richmond, where I left the Princess mighty well. She inquired mightily after you; and said a great many kind things of you. I hear she is a-breeding, but I believe nobody knows she is, so that at most it is but suspicion.

My Lord Radnor stays in town to prorogue the Parliament next Tuesday, for which he hopes his Christmas-box should be remembered, without doubt. Lady Essex has been very ill; and I believe keeps house still, for I was so tired with going to town, that I did not stir out of doors till I went to Richmond, and consequently did not go to her.

I do not think of going into waiting this month, hoping in that time, with care, to recover my health. The Duchess of Shrewsbury has waited, and got her old good humour again, and they praise her mightily.

I wish you a pleasant journey, and more rain; for this has hardly laid the dust. I am afraid I shall lose the pleasure of seeing Mrs. Dyves by your journey, but I hope some other time for that favour. I am, with the truest respect and esteem,

Dear Madam,

Your most faithful
humble servant,
M. Cowper.

My Lord, who is your humble servant, desires you would present his service to Mr. Clayton. I beg the same favour of you to Mr. Clayton and Mrs. Dyves.

CHAPTER XIV.

Account of James Erskine, Lord Grange, and of his Lady—Lord Grange marries Rachel Chiesley—Her father a murderer—Violent temper of Lady Grange—Is separated from her husband—Her outrageous conduct towards him—Their opposite political sentiments—He holds conferences with the Jacobites at his house, the Grange—She threatens to betray him and his accomplices—Her forcible abduction from her residence by Lord Lovat's servants—Her stay at Wester Polmaize—Her sufferings there—Is secretly carried to the Highlands—Enters Glenco—Buchanan's band—The Pool of St. Fillan—The party rest at Stratherick—Lady Grange embarks for Heskir—Is removed to St. Kilda—Description of that island and its inhabitants—Desolate condition of Lady Grange—The minister of St. Kilda and his daughter befriend her—They remove to Edinburgh—Excite there an interest in her behalf—Abortive attempt to rescue her from her lamentable position—She is taken to the barren coast of Sky—Becomes deranged—Her miserable death—Her sufferings become better known in Edinburgh—Letter of Lord Grange on being informed of her decease—He writes to Mrs. Clayton respecting Lord Mar—Letter from the Countess of Sandwich to Mrs. Clayton in favour of Lord Mar's son.

CHAPTER XIV.

In the course of her life, Mrs. Clayton had ample opportunities of relieving actual distress, as well as of administering to the rapacious, or of conciliating the powerful. The kindness of her royal mistress to the Jacobites has been already mentioned. In 1728, we find a letter addressed to Mrs. Clayton, appealing to the royal mercy in favour of one of the most conspicuous of those unfortunate noblemen who figured in 1715. This letter was written by James Erskine, Lord Grange, on behalf of the Earl of Mar, his brother, who was then in exile, but whose efforts to reconcile himself with the reigning family were unceasing.

The mediator, on this occasion, was, in his personal qualities, of a far more remarkable character than the Earl, who misled the gallant insurgents of the first rebellion. Lord Grange, so called, from his rank as a Justiciary Lord, was the second son of Charles, tenth Earl of Mar. He

was shrewd and subtle, and contrived, with a secret leaning to the Stuart cause, to pass for a staunch Whig and Presbyterian during the course of his life. Lord Grange professed high evangelical principles, and he might have been handed down to posterity as a saint, had it not been for certain passages in his domestic conduct. Early in life, Lord Grange was married to Rachel Chiesley, daughter of Colonel Chiesley, of Dalry. This unfortunate lady is reported to have been beautiful but imperious, and violent beyond endurance. She owed her existence to a murderer. One Sunday afternoon, during the year 1689, as the congregation of a church in Edinburgh were walking to their homes, after afternoon service, a pistol-shot was fired at one individual among them. That person, who fell to the ground a corpse, was the President of the Court of Session, and the shot was levelled by the father of Lady Grange, Chiesley, of Dalry. An award, given by the President, commanding the miscreant to make provision for his wife and family, was avenged by that desperate act.

Notwithstanding this fearful blot upon her house, Rachel Chiesley was deemed by James Erskine a suitable wife. He married her, and the union was as inauspicious, as violence on the

one hand, and duplicity on the other, could render it. The story of Lady Grange's subsequent wrongs so greatly resembles romance, that, in giving it to the public, it is necessary to assure the reader, that the traditionary accounts, from which it has been taken, have been well authenticated.

She lived with her husband for twenty years, when, in 1730, a separation was mutually agreed upon. Conflicting accounts were given of the origin of their differences. A dislike, according to Lady Grange, had suddenly arisen in her husband's mind. Lord Grange, on the other hand, declared that he had suffered long from her "rage and madness;" and it is believed, by those who best knew the facts, that his statement was correct. With much reluctance on the part of Lady Grange, a separate maintenance was, at last, arranged. A hundred a year was allowed for her support; her children, of whom there were several, remaining with their father.

For a time, there was peace; Lady Grange went, for some months into the country, but, on returning to Edinburgh, she took a house near Lord Grange, who resided sometimes at the Grange near the town, now the residence of Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, sometimes in the city, at

the bottom of Niddry's Wynd. She now, according to her husband's statement, commenced a series of persecutions: sometimes following him and her children through the streets; sometimes, screaming her reproaches to him, through his windows; and on one occasion, when the unhappy Judge had company at his house, and the court in which it was situated was full of chairs, and footmen, and flambeaux, she planted herself among the mob, near the windows, uttering vehement abuse. But there was one, whose dark deeds and determined character intimidated even the high spirit of Lady Grange. This was the famous Lord Lovat, to whose suggestion she was wont to attribute the miseries of her subsequent existence. That wretched man was then visiting Lord Grange, and among the crowds in the court, there were two of his footmen; on seeing whom, Lady Grange retreated, and was seen, that day, no more. Still her spirit was unsubdued: in her disputes with Lord Grange, she had often reminded him that she was Chiesley's daughter. She now threatened to assault him on the Bench, and the fate of the murdered President was remembered.

The state of public affairs gave the irritated woman an opportunity of vengeance. Lord Grange had long been secretly devoted to the

Stuart cause; his wife, on the other hand, was a determined partisan of the Hanoverian family. She had seen, during their happier days, with anxiety and alarm, the intrigues entered into by her husband, which involved their interests so greatly; in vain did she remonstrate with him; he had repelled her with scorn and indifference. She was nothing to him compared to this object, for which he and so many were prepared to sacrifice everything. Conferences were held at his house, the Grange, so called from having anciently been the farm-house attached to a neighbouring monastery of St. Catherine of Sienna, or Sciennes.* It was well calculated for this purpose; as it was situate at a short convenient distance to the north-east of Edinburgh, where the Jacobites could assemble with less suspicion than in the city. It was an ancient structure, originally capable of defence, and containing, no doubt, places of concealment fit for the exigences of the case. Lady Grange looked upon these meetings with a jealous eye; their purport could not be concealed from her, and her differences in politics, and anxiety at the consequences which she dreaded might ensue from these proceedings, had strengthened her in her opposition, and decided her to take

* There is still a street in that vicinity called Shenes Street, evidently derived from *Sciennes*.

active measures to prevent the fulfilment of any decisive resolution.

Many a stormy and bitter scene passed between her and her Lord, to which, jealousy of some rival in his affections, had added a sting.

On that very day, when she had last reminded her husband that "she was Chiesley's daughter," Lord Grange's resolution to separate was, it is said, formed. He had, about this time, resigned his seat on the Bench, for the purpose of carrying on, with less scandal, his interviews with the Jacobite party. He felt that he was, more or less, in the power of his wife.

Meantime, her spirit was not subdued by her misfortunes; when, too late to retrieve, she perceived, it is said, the errors of aggravating this irreconcilable dispute, or of exasperating inextinguishable hatred. Still her heart was not softened; a desire of revenge was mingled with a womanly longing for forgiveness, and with a yearning for the ties of home. One moment she could have begged for pardon; the next, she could have avenged her wrongs as it became the daughter of Chiesley. It was afterwards stated by Lord Grange, that his wife had actually taken a seat in a stage-coach for London, in order to betray him to Sir Robert Walpole. Lord Grange

sent a friend, who found means to get Lady Grange's money returned, and the seat let to another person; and the dreaded journey was, for a time delayed. But, argued the Judge, what could a man do with such a wife? There was great reason to think that she would go and do mischief to her family, and, perhaps, bring a blot upon her daughters. These were things that could not be redressed in a court of justice, and we had not then, added the shameless man, a "madhouse to lock up such unhappy people in."

Lady Grange, meantime, was unconscious of the scheme which was ripening against her. She spent her time in mournful regrets and vain longings for revenge. But that double traitor, Lord Lovat, had devised a plan for ridding himself and his fellow-conspirators of her menacing presence, which was soon to make equally vain, her grief and her hatred.

One night, a party of Highlanders in the livery of Lord Lovat, forced their way into her lodgings; and, gagging her, she was bandaged, and blindfolded; and in this state borne away by men whose hearts knew no law but the command of their chief. At the bottom of the stairs was a man in a sedan chair, who, taking the unfortunate woman on his knees, held her fast, until they had

reached the outskirts of the town. Then her captors took her out of the sedan, and placed her on a horse, behind a man, to whom she was tied; the cloth was removed from her head, and away they rode by the light of the moon.

From the lawless state of the Highlands at that period, this singular conspiracy was rendered practicable. The leader of this gang was a gentleman named Forster, of Corsebourg; nevertheless he acted as a ruffian. Abductions were, indeed, not uncommon in those days; and in the wild districts of the Highlands, victims might be immured for years, without discovery. Lady Grange, complaining of cramp in the side, begged the horseman to stop; she was answered by having the bandages again placed round her mouth. Her senses, however, were preserved to her. She remarked that the party were conducting her along the long way, where Prince's-street now stands; that they passed the Castle, frowning over the scene, and took, finally, the road to Linlithgow. She was taken, first, to the house of a Mr. John Macleod, of Muiravonside, a party in the plot.

As long as their way led through populated districts, or in the vicinity of towns, their journey was performed at night only; and even then the

most unfrequented roads were selected; once, towards evening, when approaching the town of Falkirk, Lady Grange fancied that she heard steps and strange voices, and she screamed aloud for help. She was rudely struck by her ruffian guard, and her life threatened if she dared again to raise her voice, however vainly, or to give by any action the least suspicion to those whom they chanced to pass, that she was a prisoner. She was silent. The anxiety and terror that had possessed her mind were at this moment drowned in the bitter feelings, the passion, the hatred, she felt towards him whom she considered as the author of her humiliation and suffering.

Too late she saw that she had roused a temper no less proud and violent than her own. Could she expect pity or forbearance, from one to whom she had never shown it, but whom she had thwarted, opposed, irritated and threatened?

After hurried journeys by night, and concealments by day, they arrived at a place called Wester Polmaise, belonging to a Mr. Stewart, where her conductors confided her to the care of an old gardener and his wife, in a small room in a tower, the window of which was boarded over, and wretchedly furnished, and this was her only habitation. She was well supplied with food, and every

comfort she could desire, but the one—greatest of all, liberty, was denied her; for weeks and weeks passed, and she was a prisoner, forbidden to quit that room. She pined for air and exercise, until her health and spirits failed; there seemed neither change nor hope for her. Day after day arose the same, and passed slowly and miserably away, without incident or interest. Each night became more dreary than the preceding. She could not sleep; restless and wretched, she turned upon her bed; recollection was poisoned by regret, hopes came but to mock her from their vanity and suspense, and terror filled up the portion of her misery.

The people in whose charge she was, pitied her looks, and feared lest she might die, whilst under their care. They solicited and obtained from their employers permission to remove her to a fitter chamber, and to allow her a certain degree of exercise. This indulgence had a beneficial effect upon her health, and the kindness of her gaolers contributed to ameliorate her condition; and hopes and thoughts of escape again occupied her mind. She tried in vain for information; not even of her husband and children could she learn anything, and writing materials were sedulously withehld from her.

It was late in the summer of the year 1730, when her former guards, accompanied by some of the Fraser clan, again made their appearance; she was told she was to accompany them. Lady Grange was once more in the power of men whose conduct towards her filled her with apprehensions of every kind; the journey was to be performed on horseback, and her eyes were bandaged, that she might not guess her destination. The Forth was crossed; Stirling was passed, and one night she was lodged in some gentleman's house, where the attendance of a maid, and other comforts long denied her, were supplied to her, as if to render the contrast that she was soon to experience, more dreadful. When the journey was resumed, her eyes were not bandaged, for it was improbable that she would know the country they were soon to enter; and the ruffians had less to fear from detection or detention in the wilds of the Highlands.

The roads gradually became rougher and steeper, winding and twisting about on the side of the hills; here inclosed between lofty heights, then widening and opening upon some lovely view;—the bright waters of a lake gleaming in the sun, backed by a bold and broken range of hills, that, deepened into shadow, or tinted by the noon-tide

gloom, stood there the same barren yet beautiful guardians of the northern land.

On they went, the lady and her guides; that journey was the first emblem of her future fate: hope seemed to forsake her as gradually as those rocky mountains closed and narrowed on them. Seldom now did they open to give glimpses of a brighter land beyond. Darker and more barren were those heights; stinted shrubs grew where trees had been; ferns and mosses instead of bowers; and there was no sound, save the trickling of those mountain rills, as they gushed in all their beauty and their freshness, ready to lend their aid to the weary travellers through this land of grandeur and of gloom. Beautiful in this sublime country are those little burns, twisting and turning, dashing and flowing, stopped by no obstacles, and lost from sight only to emerge in fresh purity and vigour.

At last, the party entered Glenco. Well might Lady Grange now deem her journey ended, and that here she should bid adieu to earth and life—treachery and murder hold dominion here—appropriate scene for that foul slaughter and base deed, signed and sanctioned by a Christian King. The wild rocks frown angrily, and lift their bleak points, as if to pierce the cloudy sky—there is a

curse upon Glenco; and Lady Grange, in her agony and terror, could hardly picture to her mind more horrors than that dread pass had already witnessed.

Her conductors passed silently on; some of the party were sent forward to report, lest robbers, who then infested the country, or the military, might come upon them unawares; they were obliged to hurry even over the rough road, denominated the Devil's Staircase, lest a storm, so frequent here in the night, should overtake them before a shelter could be obtained.

Some nights before, they had found an asylum in an old deserted castle—a place infested by marauders and desperate characters, which the disordered state of the country had allowed to increase. These ruins—the trysting-place of a considerable gang, commanded by one Walter Buchanan, had amongst their number the two sons of Rob Roy, and several of the wild and savage clan Macgregor, who, after their chieftain's death, had found food for their restless spirits in the desperate adventures, and daring actions, which characterized "Buchanan's band.' Plunder was not always their aim in those days of doubt and intrigue; they gave their lawless aid to those who thought no means unjustifiable

for the accomplishment of their purposes. These robbers were not, however, personally cruel. Many a weary and unfortunate traveller found welcome hospitality among them; and though it may be no great praise to say so, they freely gave what they so freely took. To food and shelter, travellers, when overtaken by night and storm in those dreary regions, were so welcome, that one could not be disposed to question how they were obtained, or by whom proffered.

Among such as these, misfortune now cast the unhappy Lady Grange. She had found kindness, however, and she had learned to value such rare felicity. Suspicious as was the mode of her travelling, the party who surrounded her had not been detained; for the wild, agitated manner of the unfortunate lady had, no doubt, persuaded these men, more than the asseverations of the guides, that she was deranged; and the plea given for their journey—that they were taking her to the pool of St. Fillan—appeared but the more reasonable. It was this holy spring (endowed since the days of the saint with miraculous powers of healing persons mentally afflicted,) which, at the Reformation, had been miraculously removed from the top of the hill to the plain below, to express, it was said, the disgust of the saint at that

event; its qualities were, however, still efficacious, and it was a common practice among the superstitious to immerse in its waters the insane; and long journeys were frequently undertaken, in order to give this pretended benefit to some of that unfortunate class. This plea had therefore served Lady Grange's attendants well, as long as they remained in the vicinity of the pool; but, as it was situated in Breadalbane land, they had left it long behind them. They looked forward, therefore, with much anxiety to any fresh meeting with banditti. The fears of the party, however, were not realized; they proceeded unmolested, but cautiously, for one or two days, traversing the most unfrequented roads, and lodging at night in caverns and ruined towers.

At last they reached Lochiel, and were rowed across, and halted at Glenfinnan—that narrow vale, which, some ten or twelve years subsequently, witnessed the unfurling of Charles Edward's standard. Lady Grange's captors, afterwards, rested for a fortnight in Stratherick, a wild district in Invernessshire, whence they journeyed northwards. Mr. Forster, who had hitherto continually headed the party, retiring, left the unfortunate lady in the hands of the Frasers—that lawless clan, to whose chief she ever attributed her dire calamities.

The party now crossed a loch into Glengarry's country, and thence, moving westward, they reached, traversing a wild region, Lochourn, an arm of the sea, where a small vessel awaited the captive. Lady Grange now foresaw her destiny. She well knew, that once removed to one of the numerous islands on the western coast, she would never be heard of more. She wept bitterly and implored compassion; but she addressed herself to those who did not comprehend her language. She now found that she was in the custody of Alexander Macdonald, a tenant of the small sland of Heskir, belonging to Sir Alexander Macdonald of Sleat. To Mr. Macdonald Lady Grange unfolded her story. She told him, that she was unlawfully detained. The answer was singular, and marks the standard of morals in the clan system. Alexander Macdonald replied, "that he would neither keep her nor any other person in custody, except Sir Alexander, his Chief, were in the affair."* There was, therefore, no hope of redress, and she was removed to Heskir. Here she remained during two years, sharing the hardships of a poor Scottish farm-house, without, during that time, once seeing

* See a very interesting tract by Mr. Chambers, entitled "The Story of Lady Grange."

bread, and with no supply of clothing. Her host and his wife, and their dependents, were the sole inhabitants of the island. Such was the situation of a woman, still in the prime of life, once beautiful and admired, and accustomed to the most refined society of her age and country. No wonder that her mind, powerful in energy and fortitude as it was, really began to break down, and that the insanity imputed to her by her husband, became eventually real.

Sir Alexander Macdonald knew her situation, yet connived at it. She was never permitted to write; but some communication appears to have passed between her and that Chief, and to have mitigated, in a slight degree, her situation. Macdonald, as well as his clan, were all in the interests of the Stuarts; and it appears certain, that their unprincipled collusion with Lord Grange was the result of a conviction that Lady Grange would betray their deeds if set at liberty.

During her residence at the abode of Alexander Macdonald, in Heskir, Lady Grange had, however, the solace of female attendance. Desolate, indeed, was that rude home; and on entering its dreary walls, she could not adopt the motto of a chieftain of that house, and exclaim, "Hope is constant in me." A

room was, however, fitted up in the Castle for her; books were given to her. Her window commanded a view of that Western Ocean, studded with its islands; and here she may have found a strange consolation in contemplating the sea, its endless variety in its loud roar, or the soothing murmur of its swelling tide, and have felt a companionship, as it were, with her feelings. Lady Grange had here, at least, that enjoyment, long denied her, of looking upon the face of nature, and tracing, in its endless phenomena, a guiding and controlling power.

Among those numerous isles dotted, here and there, with their rocky coasts and rough outline, was Lady Grange's next remove to be. Relentless cruelty could alone have prompted the persecutions which followed; for what could be feared from a helpless woman, imprisoned and guarded in a remote and unfrequented place? Nevertheless, it was deemed by her husband and his associates, that her next abode should be the wild, rocky island of Kilda—except one, the most remote from the main land, and the extreme of the British isles; there, after some months, was Lady Grange conveyed in a sloop which, in 1734, came to convey her from Heskir. The very approach to St. Kilda filled her mind with the most

gloomy anticipations, as it was surrounded on every side by almost perpendicular rocks. There is but one place at which a landing can be effected, and this always with difficulty, sometimes with danger, and it is frequently rendered altogether impossible in foul weather, from the violence and strength of the waves dashing and breaking upon the rocks beneath.

The inhabitants of this island are wretchedly poor, rude, and uneducated; and, separated so completely from communication with the main land, or even adjoining islands, they have little in common with other men, or little of interest in their character, save the spirit of daring adventure with which they prosecute their search after the wild fowl, which forms one of their chief means of support. With a strong rope, made of hides, they let themselves down over the hanging precipices, placing themselves in situations of imminent peril, which a long experience has rendered familiar and easy to them; without what are elsewhere esteemed the necessaries of life, and dependent on their own exertions for supplying their primitive wants, constant occupation and habit may prevent their feeling the peculiarities of their situation; but, from being destitute of resources, they are ill prepared to struggle against

any hardship out of the usual course, and famine is the common attendant on any sickness or disease affecting the community. At one time, the small-pox, visiting the island, prevailed to such an extent, that out of a population of more than a hundred people, but four remained. At the time of Lady Grange's imprisonment, they were about two hundred in number, under the rule of their Chief, and with a clergyman, who, according to some accounts, afterwards proved himself a kind friend to the poor wanderer.

Humbled, unhappy, thrown among strangers at a distance from all friends, an impassable barrier between her and the land she loved so well, the unfortunate Lady Grange saw too plainly now the fate that was before her; she was to be prisoner for life upon this wretched island. Her pride forsook her, her angry feelings, her passionate reproaches were sunk in a tumult of self-accusations, regret, and despair. In vain, she supplicated for means to write her repentance to her husband, to sue for mercy and forgiveness from one whom she had once threatened and made for ever her bitter enemy. She would stand for hours upon the rocky edge of the island, tempted, at times, to cast herself down and perish in the mighty bulwark of her

prison, and then turn away with that sickening of heart, that intense longing, and that desire for rest which she could not find.

The good, the Christian minister of St. Kilda was her comfort in many a dreary hour; he talked to her, and tried to reconcile her to a lot which he could not alter; and the consolations of religion, no doubt, supported her in the sad and dreary years she passed in that lonely spot. She might not have writing materials; but she prevailed upon this minister to put down, from her dictation, the history of all she had gone through and suffered; and this document she contrived effectually to preserve and to conceal: although at one time earnestly entreated by the clergyman to destroy it, his kindness to her having been so much resented, that he entertained apprehensions, even of his life, should this document be discovered. She afterwards found means to write two letters to a friend in Edinburgh, and these she curiously concealed in balls of yarn, and then confided them to the care of the clergyman's daughter, who was less timid than her father, and equally sympathizing.

The subsequent removal of this family to Edinburgh, at the same time that it renewed her hopes,

deprived her of the only real friends she possessed, and the kindness she so much needed in the island of St. Kilda. Though absent, they were not less mindful of her, and exerted themselves so diligently on her behalf, that, together with the friend to whom Lady Grange had written, they obtained means for her deliverance, and a vessel armed with proper authority was sent to claim her. After some time spent in preparations and delays, they approached and finally reached St. Kilda; they were too late; some quarrel between the Chisholm and the keepers of Lady Grange had occasioned her removal just at the very hour when deliverance from her misery was approaching, and Lady Grange, once more, before her weary pilgrimage was ended, was taken again among strangers, and confided to the charge of men whose hearts, stony as the barren land they inhabited, received and acted upon the order to treat her with severity, with as little hesitation and unwillingness as creatures with feelings could possibly testify.

Whether Lord Grange had the address to silence all inquiries by the assurance that her being in St. Kilda was a mistake, or whether people were persuaded into a belief of her insanity from a knowledge of the violence of her character, I do not know, but the vessel returned which conveyed Lady

Grange away from St. Kilda. Whence it had come, no more inquiries were instituted, and the wretched victim of this strange oppression, was atoning for the anxiety and alarm she had occasioned to her persecutors, by a confinement in a rude cavern of the coast of Skye; where scanty and coarse food supplied, at long intervals, the maintenance of one born to authority and affluence.

Long had she borne up against *all;* but mental misery had been strong, and now aided by bodily privation and suffering, the mind and body wasted away, and solitude finished the work—the destruction of sense, of reason. In that tall haggard form, that feeble shrinking step, who could trace the lofty dignity of the once-beautiful Lady Grange! Those dark locks, thin and gray, those fair hands, withered and coarse; the flashing eye, speaking but too plainly now of the lowest state of human degradation, a hopeless imbecility! She became, in fact, after the lapse of ten long years, the lunatic her enemies had proclaimed her to the world, and was left to wander whither her unguided fancy willed her. The poor here were kind to her, they supplied her with the little food they could, and she wandered, in an unconscious forgetfulness of all that had been, from hut to hut a common beggar, in need yet wanting not,

wretched yet knowing it not, with a heavy heart yet she knew not why: and so for weeks, until the remnant of humanity, worn out and exhausted, gave way, and friendless and alone, among strangers and destitute, did Lady Grange pass from this world to one where there is *mercy* and forgiveness.

Such is the account which was transmitted to the world, partly through the means of the minister of St. Kilda, named Maclennan, partly through other sources. During her seclusion, which lasted, in the island of St. Kilda, seven years, Lady Grange had occupied herself in many vain attempts to escape, in which she had been aided by Mrs. Maclennan, the minister's wife, but without success. She was kind to the poor peasantry, giving them from her stores, which were brought to her once a-year by the steward of the island, when he came to collect the rents, from the cotters, in kind. Among these stores were the luxuries of tea and sugar; and, unhappily, of spirits. Of these, Lady Grange was accustomed, it is said, to partake too freely: driven to that dreadful remedy for an aching heart by misery, her temper, naturally violent, became furious, and was displayed among those who surrounded her at St. Kilda.

The minister of Kilda, Mr. Maclennan, and

his family, had disclosed, as we have said, the place of her concealment to the friends of Lady Grange, of whom there was still one left who had never forgotten the sorrows of the wretched prisoner. This was her legal adviser, Mr. Hope, who, though a Jacobite, had, when he became aware of the place of her confinement, taken steps to procure her release.

The events of Lord Grange's political career had not contributed to secure him esteem. He had, for some time, ceased to occupy his seat on the bench, and, after fruitless negotiations with Sir Robert Walpole, had become an opponent of that minister, and a partisan of the Prince of Wales. Mr. Hope obtained, however, with some difficulty, a warrant from the Lord Justice-Clerk, (the supreme criminal judge in Scotland,) to liberate Lady Grange; although the application was opposed by Lord Grange and his friends. Eventually a vessel was fitted out to obtain information, but we have seen how unsuccessful was the effort. By some accounts, it appeared that Lady Grange had been removed to a place where she was more humanely treated than before. The statement generally received as true has been already given. Her days, indeed, closed in a fearful mystery, upon which the imagination dwells in

solemn uncertainty. Every effort was made by Lord Grange to throw discredit upon the narrative of the Maclennans; and for some time legal proceedings were stopped by these means. In 1743, Mr. Hope obtained, however, in an action in the Court of Session, the arrears of Lady Grange's allowance, amounting to 1150*l.*; and a judgment against the defendant, then absent.

In June, 1745, just before the last insurrection was begun, the close of Lady Grange's singular career was communicated to her husband. The following expressions were penned on that occasion by him, when writing to a friend:

"I most heartily thank you, my dear friend, for the timely notice you gave me of the death of *that person*. It would be a ridiculous untruth to pretend grief for it; but, as it brings to my mind a train of various things for many years back, it gives me concern. Her retaining wit and facetiousness to the last surprises me. These qualities none found in her, no more than common sense or good nature, before she went to these parts; and of the reverse of all which, if she had not been irrecoverably possessed, in an extraordinary and insufferable degree, after many years' fruitless endeavours to reclaim her, she had never seen these parts. I long for the particulars of her death,

which you are pleased to tell me, I am to have by next post."*

Such was the bitter, remorseless sentiment of this man's bad heart. It is remarkable that he does not, in this letter, insist upon Lady Grange's alleged insanity as an excuse for his persecution. It is but too probable, however, that the infuriated passions of Lady Grange—that, for instance, of jealousy—may have amounted nearly to insanity at an early period of her life; but mild restraint, not barbarity and lawless intimidation, should have been used to correct and restore her wounded and harassed mind.

James Erskine, Lord Grange, died in 1754, and his son James, by his ill-fated wife, who died in 1784, left two sons, of whom the eldest, John Francis, was restored to the Earldom of Mar, forfeited by his grandfather John, the eleventh Earl.

The following letter was addressed by Lord Grange to Mrs. Clayton, in 1728, in behalf of his exiled brother, John Earl of Mar, the leader in the insurrection in 1715. No one can condemn the efforts of Lord Grange in behalf of his brother, but the cringing and supplicating tone of this letter is very characteristic, both of him who

* Tract in "Chambers' Edinburgh Journal," already referred to.

required the intercession and of him who was the medium of it.*

LORD GRANGE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

London, 29th October, 1728.

MADAM,

Pardon me for using this freedom, but I presume it will give you less trouble than a visit, and you was pleased to allow me to acquaint you with any new thing that should happen in Lord M—r's affair. I was at Windsor on Thursday last. I found their disposition towards him much the same as before, but no particular fact charged against him, but that he had not sufficiently valued the conditional pardon, and so would not be contented with it nor grateful for it. Any other harsh thing thrown out against him, is only inferred from this, and not founded on any particular so far as I can discover. Neither to Monsieur de Broglio, nor to me would they tell what evidence they had of the truth of this fact, which leaves me in the dark, and must make it the harder for my friend to vindicate himself. If he be guilty of what he is charged

* The materials o Lady Grange's extraordinary story are derived from Dr. Macleay's work, Mr. Chambers's Tract, and "The History of the House of Fraser," by Anderson. The facts are, I believe, unquestioned. The degree of palliation to be given to Lord Grange, differs in different minds. No aggravation could excuse his conduct. There are also some curious facts, tending to the other side, in "The Tales of a Century," recently published by the Chevalier John Sobieski Stuart.

with, I will ever condemn him for it as much as any man can do; but I believe it will not be thought a fault for me to wish and hope he may be innocent. If he be not, I cannot tell how to account for a letter from him, by the last post, to an acquaintance of his, dated the 13th of this month, N.S., and so before he could possibly know what is said against him. He desires his acquaintance to inform me, that for cheapness he had some thoughts of passing this winter somewhere in the south of France, or at Boulogne-sur-Mer; but not knowing whether it would be approved of, he desires I would beg Sir Robert Walpole and Lord Townshend to direct him where to reside, being resolved to live as would be most agreeable to them, who, he believes know their majesties' sentiments, to comply with which would be all his study and endeavour, as becomes a dutiful and loyal subject, so much obliged to royal mercy.

As things now stand, I know not whether to acquaint Lord Townshend of this by a letter, or wait till he come to town, (which he is to do on Thursday next,) or not to speak of it at all, not knowing what misconstruction the present prepossession against him may tempt them to put upon it.

If your ladyship is to honour me with your commands, be pleased to send them to me at Mr. M'Lean's, in Panton Square, near the head of Haymarket. The generous part you act for people in so great distress is very uncommon; and I

cannot but remark it, with thankfulness to Almighty God, that when others are turned less favourable, your ladyship so disinterestedly exerts so much goodness for us; and may God, who puts it in your heart, return it in a thousand rich blessings on you and your family, and make me so happy as to be capable by real services to testify, that with the greatest esteem, respect, and gratitude, I am, Madam,

Your ladyship's most obedient,
most dutiful, humble servant,
JAMES ERSKINE.

In a letter, not dated, but probably written at a later period, we find intercession made by the Countess of Sandwich for the son of the exiled Earl of Mar; the lady who performed this office of charity, was Elizabeth, second daughter of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, and sister and co-heir of Charles, third Earl, and was married to Edward, third Earl of Sandwich, Lord-Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum of the county of Huntingdon. She died in France; and Horace Walpole, in one of his letters to the Reverend William Cole, says that the French Government seized her property, in accordance with the *droit d'aubaine*. The young nobleman of whom mention is made might have puzzled some genealogists to discover, as the letter is indorsed, "The young man is Lord

Erskine, son to my Lord *Mayor*." He was Thomas, only son of John, eleventh Earl of Mar, attainted by Act of Parliament for the active part he took in the rebellion of 1715. He died abroad in 1732, and his son in 1766.

COUNTESS OF SANDWICH TO MRS. CLAYTON.

MADAM,

Give me leave to renew to your memory, a person, who, by a long and silent absence may be justly placed in your thoughts among the dead; but the remembrance of the favours I received from you at the time when I had the happiness to converse with you will always be present to my mind; and the numberless merits that compose your character, are often the subjects of my most agreeable reflections. Do I need any apology, Madam, to your generosity and wisdom, when I take the liberty to present to you a young nobleman of great merit; he has the virtues of much riper years than his own—modesty, prudence, sobriety, and a good proportion of learning; his early good sense is seen in the desire he has to employ his abilities in measures totally opposite to those his unhappy father so fatally fell into.

There are dispositions which you will grant your protection to. You will also, I hope, give me your pardon for this temerity, when I ingenuously own, I am not made to refuse the requests of the afflicted; and their troubles must be very

great, who have recourse to so weak a hand as mine to help them.

Once more I ask pardon for,

Madam,

Your most obedient,

most humble servant,

E. SANDWICH.

CHAPTER XV.

Value of Mrs. Clayton's proximity to the Queen—The Duchess of Somerset requires her interest in favour of her uncle—Mr. Hamilton provided for—Application for the Rocker's place—The widow of Brigadier Mathews—Lord Chancellor Talbot—An application for apartments in Somerset House—A new Auditor of the Duchy of Cornwall—Arrears due to the Keeper of the King's stud—Sir Archer Croft, and his zeal for the House of Hanover—Mrs. Clayton a patroness of literary merit—"Lucius Junius Brutus," and its author, William Duncombe—Sir John Guise, and his drama, "Palmyra."

CHAPTER XV.

We have already given various indications of the value of Mrs. Clayton's proximity to the Queen, in the judgment of those who deserve the title of Waiters upon Fortune; but they form a very small portion of the number of these epistolary petitions. We have ample evidence in her correspondence, that applications to her, with the object of obtaining her influence and intercession, embraced all classes and ranks, and were directed to all kinds of objects. In this chapter we shall endeavour to show their variety. Our first example is from a lady of high rank, who seems desirous, according to her own account, of being ranked amongst those who are "thankful for small favours," and who look carefully after the interests of their relations.

THE DUCHESS OF SOMERSET TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Petworth, Sept. 17.

Madam,

When I had the honour of being admitted to the Queen last October, I presumed to make an

humble request in behalf of my uncle, one of his Majesty's Chaplains, namely, an exchange of the Prebendary of Canterbury, which he was possessed of, for a Prebendary of Westminster. Her Majesty was not only graciously pleased to tell me it should be granted, but moreover, to observe that the favour asked was a very small one, and in truth, so it is; for the difference in the value of those two preferments is a trifle, and the exchange no otherwise desirable to my uncle than, as it would save him a long journey, which, upon the account of his age and ill health, with others that he is obliged to take, is very grievous to him. But since there has not as yet been any vacancy of a Prebendary of Westminster, and that, by the death of his brother, the Deanery of York is now vacant, I would beg the favour of you, Madam, to present my most humble duty to the Queen, and that I hope, in her usual goodness, she will be pleased to think of my uncle Edward for that Deanery, since, by his long residence with his brother at York, he is well known at that place, and, I may safely venture to say, that he is there, as well as in all other places where he is well known, much beloved and esteemed; so that he, as far as any one can be, may be said to be worthy of some mark of her Majesty's favour, who has made all the clergy of England happy, by taking them under her immediate protection. But if this Deanery should be already disposed of, I flatter myself that I may depend upon the first vacancy

for the other exchange, being extremely solicitous that my uncle's life should, in his advanced age, he made more easy to him; especially since his grief of mind for the loss of his brother, with whom he had lived for so many years in the strictest friendship, is but too likely to add to his present ill state of health, and make the removing from place to place still the more irksome.

I beg pardon for giving you the trouble of so long a letter, but I hope you will excuse it, and believe me,

Madam,

Your obedient humble servant,

C. SOMERSET.

The Duke of Somerset desires his most humble service to both Mr. Clayton and you.

The next example shows the extent of Mrs. Clayton's influence in a particularly strong light. The readiness of the Lady of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to oblige the Queen's friend is extremely instructive. The recipient of this patronage, is no doubt the Mr. Hamilton recommended to Mrs. Clayton, in a letter from the Bishop of Killala.

LADY CARTERET TO MRS. CLAYTON.

February 16.

I wrote to dear Mrs. Clayton very soon after the receiving her letter, and in that I sent my Lord's

promise to provide for Mr. Hamilton in the way you desired, as soon as it was in his power. I have now the pleasure to tell you, that he has been as good as his word, for Mr. Hamilton is placed on the English establishment. My Lord desired me to inform you of it, and to present his most humble service to you and Mr. Clayton. The last packets confirmed the news of Miss Dyves being received into her Royal Highness's family, which pleased me extremely, for the more she is known and seen, I am sure the more she will be liked and esteemed. I hope her Royal Highness has quite recovered her lying-in, and that, when you write, I shall have a particular account of her health from you. You cannot expect any news from hence, for I believe everybody here are strangers to you. I beg my service to Mr. Clayton, and hope you will believe me, with great sincerity, dear Mrs. Clayton's

Most affectionate,
humble servant,
F. CARTERET.

The next applicant was a member of a respectable Dutch family who came to England with William and Mary. It appears that this Queen had a particular regard for the mother of the writer, and that Queen Anne had not been regardless of the claims of the family to her consideration.

MRS. CATHERINE DARTIQUENAUE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

The first motive that induced me to wait on you, Madam, was more to pay my respects to you than to promote any interest of my own, and the civil reception I found confirmed the opinion I first conceived of you, when I had the honour to see you at my brother's. I confess, though I have seen Courts abroad and at home, I never liked anybody so well as yourself. Your good sense and polite manner distinguishes you from most of our sex. This may look like flattery in one that wants your kind assistance; but my first sister, Dartiquenaue, that excellent woman, agreed with me in this truth, as doth everybody else: you must throw off all that good nature, generosity, and compassion you are mistress of, if you mean to guard yourself from the solicitations and importunities of those that stand in need of your favours, as doth your servant at this time. My hopes are all in you, Madam, who seemed so far to encourage them as to assure me you would have me in your thoughts. A promise from you I esteem equal to possession. I have a profound honour for the Royal Family, and would rather get my bread by rendering them my service than to have a pension. I will not tell my brother of the application I have made to you, Madam, till I have obtained something; then, I dare affirm, he will return you thanks, and have a grateful sense of the obligation. All my friends that know

I have applied myself to you, Madam, esteem me happy, and hope, if my suit be favoured by the worthy Mrs. Clayton, that I may hope for success, as you have the Princess's ear. I am ashamed, after so long an epistle, to beg your patience a little longer. Pray, Madam, read the petition that induced Queen Mary to settle a handsome pension on my mother, and made her besides, frequent exhibitions out of the privy purse, by the hands of the Bishops of Salisbury and St. Asaph, and also gave us a lodging in her palace at Whitehall. The pension was continued by the late Queen till her death, and since that I have not asked a favour of anybody. I have sent a little billet I received from my cousin Skipwith; you best know if she is misinformed as to the Rocker's place; provided it be true, and that her Highness hath altered her mind, I will gladly accept of that employment till a better can be had, and I fancy, Madam, you can get me in there with less trouble to yourself. I submit all to your better judgment, and hope you will grant your pardon as a mark of your favour to,

Madam,
Your most humble servant,
KATHE. DARTIQUENAUE.

I lodge at Mr. Clark's house, in Jermyn-street, near St. James's Church, and on the least notice will be ready to attend you.

The case of the widow of Brigadier Mathews

was worthy the intercession of the fair writer of the following letter. She was Cecil, the wife of Lord Chancellor Talbot.

LADY TALBOT TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Bloomsbury, March 6.

I fear, Madam, you will think me very impertinent for encroaching upon your precious minutes, but I hope for a pardon, when you find charity is the motive that induces me to it. The object I beg leave to recommend to you is Mrs. Sarah Mathews, widow to Brigadier William Mathews, to whom the Queen allowed a pension of a hundred pounds a year, at the request of Lord Godolphin; but the late Ministry, we all know, were such real friends to the landed interest, that they parted with money to none but to those that were possessed of many acres, from which proceeding she was near three years without receiving one penny: this, you will easily believe, put her under great difficulties; and all the money she hath since received went towards discharging those debts she then unavoidably contracted, and there is yet a whole year due from the Queen. Our good King hath continued her pension, but, at Christmas last, there was half a year due from him. Her present distress is so great, that she is obliged to live without a servant, though she is seldom free, either from the gout, stone, or racking colics; and if some part of her arrears cannot be procured, she must want com-

mon necessaries: if the whole could be obtained, her circumstances would be pretty easy; but that I dare only hint at, not knowing whether it is a proper request, and I am sure she would be truly thankful for the payment of the last half-year. Could you, Madam, be the author of this good, either by your interest with Mr. Clayton, or by engaging the Princess, whose ears I am told are always open to the cries of the distressed, to represent these facts to the King, or by any other method you shall judge proper, it would be a worthy act of charity done to one of the most valuable women I ever knew; but I should be unjust to her, if I failed telling you that she hath ever been a steady Whig, and had the courage to avow her principles during the late administration, though her bread was endangered by it; if you grant this request, be pleased to distinguish her after the same manner that I have done in the former part of this letter, there being two Mrs. Mathews, that partake of the King's bounty. Dear Mrs. Clayton pardon this freedom from

Your obedient, humble servant,

CECIL TALBOT.

Mrs. Mathew's pension is upon Mr. Nicholas's office, unless there hath been a late removal.

A son of the Earl of Drogheda is next found applying for apartments in Somerset House, a favour which appears to have been in the gift of

the Crown at that period, as it is allowed, in certain cases, at Hampton Court.

THE HON. CAPEL MOORE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Elvitham, near Hertford Bridge, Hants,
December 23, 1731.

MADAM,

I ought, and do beg ten thousand pardons for stealing from you a few moments, who so perfectly well know how to employ time. Wishing well to myself has taught me to ask advice, and a better judgment than ever before directed me, has made me know, ever since I have had the honour to be received by you, that I cannot have it so perfect from any other hand. Now I am in a terrible fright, and apprehend that by the time you have read thus far, you have said, "Lord, why should the man trouble me?—what have I to do with him?—impertinent," &c.; but, notwithstanding all these most reasonable apprehensions that startle me, I must assume my courage, and open my suit.

It will be quite convenient to our affairs, to have lodgings in Somerset House, and I must entreat you to let me know what will be the proper method for us to apply to the Queen, for to receive that honour. I am the worst advocate in the world in my own cause, and flatter myself not quite so bad a one in any for my friends. I am told that those Mrs. Ceres had are

empty, and some others. Madam, I grieve that the most impudent thing I ever did in my whole life should be to you, and hope for your pardon, which will be infinite goodness to,

Madam,

Your most obedient,
most humble servant,
CAPEL MOORE.

My wife begs you will do her the honour to accept her best compliments.

His Majesty's pensions seem often to have been in arrears. On the back of the acknowledgment given in the next note is the following sentence in Mrs. Clayton's handwriting, "Mrs. Marshal, widow to the Keeper of the King's stud. Mrs. C. got her 2000*l.* arrears due from Geo. I."

MRS. MARSHALL TO MRS. CLAYTON.

January 31, 1729.

MADAM,

Just now I received the glad tidings of my nephew receiving my money that was due to my dear husband, from the King. I am very sure it is through your Honour's charitable and kind solicitation in my behalf, that it is got. I must impute it, next to God's mercy, to your great and innate goodness that I am not utterly ruined, for indeed, Madam, I was reduced to almost desperation. How is it possible for me humbly to express

my thanks to you and Mr. Clayton for so great goodness? But I hope that God that inspired your hearts with so much mercy to me, will multiply his blessings on you both in this world and the next, which that he may, shall always be the prayers of

Madam,

Your Honour's most humble
and most obedient servant,
MARY MARSHALL.

On the back of the next note exists the following memorandum: "From Sir Archer Croft, Baronet, to Mrs. Clayton. The thing was done." It is evident the gentleman was anxious to testify his zeal for the house of Hanover. He was the second Baronet of the name, and married, in 1723, Frances, daughter of the Honourable Brigadier-General Waring. He was born in 1683, and died in 1753.

SIR ARCHER CROFT TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Kensington, Dec. 15, 1727.

MADAM,

I am very sensible how much I ought to ask pardon for taking this liberty with a lady to whom I am an entire stranger. The best apology I can make for it is, my disinterested zeal for the service of her Majesty, in whose royal favour you have deservedly so great a share. As I was ambitious

to distinguish myself early in the last session of Parliament, upon his Majesty's accession to the Crown, so I beg leave to assure you, I had no other view in doing it, than to testify the regard I ever had for the succession of the illustrious House of Hanover. With these thoughts, I cannot be easy to find myself not in the same capacity of serving my country, occasioned by the hard usage I had at my election. If you, Madam, shall approve of laying this before her Majesty, which is entirely submitted to your better judgment, I shall yet hope to be restored to my seat in Parliament, upon some double return; in which, if I am so happy to have her Majesty's recommendation, it shall be my constant endeavour, to the utmost of my ability, to approve myself worthy of so distinguishing a mark of her Majesty's favour; and shall gladly lay hold of every opportunity to acknowledge the great obligation you will lay on me, who am, with great respect,

Madam,

Your most obedient,
humble servant,
Ar. Croft.

Sir Archer was not easily satisfied. He aspired to more regular, perhaps more profitable employment. The Court influence was used to get him into Parliament. We are not aware that his wishes were complied with in any other way.

SIR ARCHER CROFT TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Denington Castle, near Newbery, Berks,
December 3, 1728.

MADAM,

When I reflect upon the obligations you have laid me under, I am very much ashamed to think that my ill state of health would not (till I understood by my friend, Dr. Clarke, it was too late) allow me an opportunity to pay that respect to you, which I hope you will easily believe me, I have the justest sense, is my duty to do. If I have not already too far presumed on your goodness, and contracted a debt I shall never be able to pay, I would take the liberty once more to put myself under your protection, if you shall think me worthy of the favour I ask. The happy prospect we now have, of a Prince of Wales to reside among us, must make every man who is desirous to distinguish himself in the service of his King and country proud of being a servant to his Royal Highness. I will not be so vain, to put my merit into the balance with those who have been thought worthy of the Royal favour: but I hope I may say my zeal for the Royal Family is at least equal to theirs; which I shall always be ready to give the best proof of that I am able, upon every occasion that offers itself in Parliament. It will not, perhaps, become me to say what employment I would choose, any farther than that I doubt my indifferent health will not allow me to accept of

one that requires long and constant attendance. I submit myself to their Majesties' wisdom and goodness, and if I am so happy to deserve your recommendation, I need not doubt the success.

I am with great truth and respect,
Madam,
Your most obliged, faithful,
humble servant,
AR. CROFT.

The correspondence before us contains several other specimens of the art of letter-writing, as applied to the important object of advancing one's own interests or influence. Some other examples will be brought forward in the next chapter, but they will consist exclusively of applicants of a different description.

Much to her credit, Mrs. Clayton occasionally appears in the character of a patroness of literary merit; and, as in the case of Stephen Duck, her confidential position with the Queen usually enabled her to do this with unusual advantage to the object of her selection. In the instance now to be brought forward, we have not to record the good fortune of a Thresher; the circumstances of her present correspondent were as superior to poor Stephen's as his abilities. William Duncombe had the advantages of a good education—the fruits of which he began to show in his

twenty-fifth year, in a translation of the Twenty-ninth Ode of the First Book of Horace, in the edition of that poet, published in 1715, commonly known as "The Wits' Horace." He subsequently published several poems, originals and translations, criticisms and pamphlets. He obtained a share in the "Whitehall Evening Post," to the columns of which he frequently contributed; he obtained a share also in a lottery ticket for 1000*l.*, drawn in 1725, and, as he married the lady who divided the ticket with him, the moiety was merged in the whole. A few years later, he distinguished himself by publishing some animadversions on "The Beggars' Opera," then in great vogue, in which he exhibited the ill effects likely to arise from such representations of vice and profligacy.

His tragedy of "Lucius Junius Brutus," the subject of his letter to Mrs. Clayton, attracted the notice of Booth, Cibber, and Wilks, who approved of it, and promised representation; but, unfortunately, the play did not meet with friends amongst the actors. Booth declined to act in it at all; Wilks, who was to have played the part of Titus, died; and the dramatic world fell into a state of anarchy, which prevented its appearance for two years.

Junius Brutus was brought out at Drury Lane, but the author found so powerful a rival in the singer Farinelli, who was then bewitching the town, that his play was acted but six nights; and though the performance was repeated, and the tragedy published a month later, with a dedication to Lord Chief Justice Hardwicke, it did not take with the public. That the cause of this want of success was "the invidious construction" referred to by the author, we entertain a reasonable doubt.

WILLIAM DUNCOMBE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Frith-street, Soho,
Thursday, five in the afternoon.

MADAM,

I beg a thousand pardons for the presumption of this address, but am encouraged to make it by the generous approbation, I am informed from Miss Dyves, you was pleased to give my tragedy of Junius Brutus; and, indeed, find it absolutely necessary for my own justification.

Mr. Fletewood has told me, to my great surprise, that an invidious construction has been put on several passages in it, as if intended to reflect on the Government, which was the furthest thing in the world from my thoughts, and gives him great uneasiness as well as me. What I chiefly aimed at, was to do honour to the memory of King

William, and the Revolution. For the truth of this, I appeal to the Dean of Rochester, who read the play two years ago, and kindly gave me some hints for the improvement of it. He told me, also, he was, two or three times, to wait upon you, Madam, in order to have put it into your hands. He showed it to Lady Hardwicke, and other of his friends, who all approved it. My intention is farther confirmed by my original prologue, which the Dean himself read, at the time above mentioned, and showed it also to Lady Hardwicke. But the players refused to speak it; I was therefore obliged to alter it. I here inclose a copy of it. If you think fit, Mr. Fletewood will command it to be spoken. I likewise inclose a copy, as it stands at present. I shall esteem it the greatest honour imaginable, if you, Madam, should think it proper to represent this to her Majesty, for whom and the Royal Family I ever had the highest veneration.

I humbly beg pardon for the trouble here given you, and am, with the greatest respect,

Madam,

Your dutiful and devoted

humble servant,

W. Duncombe.

The imputation laid upon me, as it was entirely unexpected, gives me the greater concern.

I believe my father and brother were not altogether unknown to Mr. Clayton.

The players thought fit to omit one very emphatical line in a speech of Titus, in the fifth act:—

> "Rome, which looks up to Brutus as her father—
> Unsettled Rome requires some great example:
> By my just punishment, then, strike a terror
> On all who meditate, like me, her ruin,
> And would restore a prince they have abjured."

They struck out the last line.

I must do Mr. Fletewood the justice to own, that my original prologue was never offered to him, for it having been rejected last winter by the players, I concluded it would not be acceptable to him; but, to my great satisfaction, find I was mistaken.

I have this moment received the inclosed letter from the Dean of Rochester, which I humbly beg leave, Madam, to lay before you.*

The failure of this play may have caused Mr. Duncombe to turn his back on the stage, but he continued to maintain a respectable position as a miscellaneous writer, contributing to "The World," and other periodicals, and bringing out translations of his favourite Latin authors, Cicero and Horace. He was much esteemed by many eminent men, particularly by John Earl of Cork and Orrery, who published "Letters to Mr. Dun-

* The inclosure has not been preserved.

combe from Italy," and Dr. Herring, Archbishop of Canterbury. In 1763, he published his "Remarks on Lord Bolingbroke's Notion of a God," which were greatly approved of by his religious friends. He died February 13, 1769, at the age of seventy-nine.

The next applicant for Mrs. Clayton's favour held the rank of Baronet, Sir John Guise, of Rendcombe, in Gloucestershire. He had also written a play, and although he speaks slightingly of public, he was evidently very desirous of private approbation. "Palmyra" was sent to Mrs. Clayton in MS. We have not been able to find a copy of it in print: we suspect Sir John was not more fortunate in wooing the Dramatic Muse than Mr. Duncombe.

SIR JOHN GUISE, BART., TO MRS. CLAYTON.

MADAM,

According to your command, I send you my tragedy of "Palmyra," and faulty as it is, I must confess it is the best I can do.

If I were afraid of censure, I would not deliver it up to your fine and exact judgment, which cannot fail of seeing many faults in it, but I assure you, Madam, I had rather receive your remarks than the public approbation, which at this time of day is bestowed on very bad stuff.

It will content me, if her Majesty, yourself and some few others receive it with favour, of which I am not without hopes, since her Majesty was pleased, as you know, to accept of it when it was first wrote, and honoured it with some expressions which, were I less acquainted with her Majesty's incomparable judgment and taste, I could never think it worthy of.

However, Madam, be pleased to read it, and as I have a very great desire to know your opinion of it, let me know when I shall come for it, that not only I may hear you speak of it, but that I may get a fair copy for her Majesty, having now no other but this.

Your most obedient
and most humble servant,
J. Guise.

We shall find, in subsequent chapters, many other evidences of the interest Mrs. Clayton took in advancing the fortunes of literary aspirants.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Church of England, Mrs. Clayton's peculiar charge—Wake, Bishop of Lincoln, recommending himself at Court—Dr. Delaney soliciting criticism from Mrs. Clayton—Dr. Whatley's curious discourse—Juno and Pallas at Court—Begging preferment—Poetical portrait of a Court Chaplain—Dr. Marten of Hammersmith—His interview with the Bishop of London—His disappointment and consolation—A solitary instance of clerical conscientiousness—Père Courayer's interview with Queen Caroline—The Bishop of Killala introduces the Bishop of Clonfert—A family division of the Irish Church—The Instructor of Stephen Duck—The obliging Lady of the Lord Chancellor—Prebends waiting for a remove—A description of a cathedral city.

CHAPTER XVI.

Mrs. Clayton seems to have bestowed a peculiar attention on the interests of the Church of England. We have already, in more than one place, afforded evidence of her great influence in such matters—the present chapter will show much more. Wake, Bishop of Lincoln, subsequently Archbishop of Canterbury, to whom the reader has already been introduced, must be allowed a place in this chapter, if only to show how anxious were the divines of the last century to recommend themselves in their sermons to the Court.

WAKE BISHOP OF LINCOLN TO MRS. CLAYTON.

July 21, 1715.

Honoured Madam,

Permit me by this bearer to beg your kind acceptance of a sermon which I had the honour to present to the Princess this morning. It was impossible for me at that time to offer them to the ladies about her, nor can I yet tell how to do it, without your kind assistance, which I hope you will please not to deny me.

I beg you, therefore, to order your servant, in my name, to leave them with some proper person at the back-stairs, for the Grooms of the Stole; the Lady of the Bedchamber in waiting; and such other persons of your Court, as you think I ought to give them to.

If in this I am not right, I hope your goodness will direct me in the proper method I ought to take. I would willingly give no offence; but I am very ignorant in these matters, and know not with whom to advise so well as with yourself, about them. I hope you will excuse this freedom and trouble, and believe me to be, with the utmost respect,

Honoured Madam,
Your most obliged and faithful
humble servant,
W. Lincoln.

The writer of the following communication, of whom some notice has been given in a preceding page, was the husband of the Mrs. Delany who figures so prominently in the Diary of Madame D'Arblay. Upon what discourse he solicited the criticism of one of the Queen's ladies does not appear.

REV. DR. DELANY TO MRS. CLAYTON.

February 20.

Madam,

If the care of your health should confine you, (I mean keep you from church this morning,) and

you meet no other amusement more agreeable to you, and the day, I beg the favour of you to read this discourse with all the attention you can; and to report your judgment of it with all the openness of candour, and all the severity of criticism; find all the faults, and raise all the objections that you can. It is the interest of truth to be so treated—and I hope one may insist upon the right of being faulted by a fair lady, with as little vanity as Bevil (in the play) does upon the right of being refused; it is the only right I shall ever plead to any favour from you, except that of being considered as I really am, with all imaginable esteem,

Your most obedient humble servant,

PAT. DELANY.

The Rev. Robert Whatley, M.A., to whom our readers are indebted for the next epistle, was a Prebendary of York, and Rector of Tofts, in Norfolk. Among his published sermons are—one on Agrippa's words to Paul, which went through two editions, and a Visitation Sermon at Easter. He also brought out in 1739, Three Letters giving an account of his Travels in Germany, &c., 1721-2.

THE REV. R. WHATLEY, M.A., TO MRS. CLAYTON.

MADAM,

I humbly crave leave to make you a present of the inclosed discourse. An indirect attempt to

vindicate the honour and equality of your sex, cannot but be well received by her that is of so distinguishing a character in it. And the express endeavours to make men more worthy of their fair sisters, and to live more justly and happily with them, will not I hope be less acceptable.

I have taken the liberty, Madam, of sending a duplicate, that you may have it in your power, if I should be so happy as to have the honour of leaving it in your will, to present it to a greater personage of your own sex, who, I am sensible, will not disprove the cause, however little reason there may be to approve the management of it. To whom I may justly lay claim to the honour of being—since she forgets nothing—not altogether unknown, either in name or person. But to make a humble offering, graciously received by a Juno, [there is] nothing like its being presented by a Pallas.

I have the honour to be,
Madam,
Your most obedient
humble servant,
THE AUTHOR, R. WHATLEY.

The present sent by this divine to the Queen and her friend, so classically addressed by him as Juno and Pallas, the latter, in a note on the back of his letter, describes as "A Discourse made to a

Person in a Country Parish doing Penance for the Sin of Fornication. Recommended to the House of Commons."

Here, again, we find Mrs. Clayton referred to, as the ordinary channel through which preferment in the Church was to be obtained. The reference of the writer to his brother's parliamentary services, shows also another sign of the times, and affords a proof of the base principles on which patronage was conferred.

THE REV. HUGH LEWIS TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Kew Green, November 20, 1729.

MADAM,

Nothing but a deep sense of your incomparable goodness can make me hope for pardon, in asking leave to address you in this manner. I had, some years since, reason to believe from my most gracious Queen's great favour and goodness to me, that in the course of the dispositions of Church preferments, I should have had some small share, and that, more especially, when her Majesty, as Princess, was pleased to send Mr. Eckershall to inquire after the state of the Church at Millbank, Westminster, in favour of me. That being then unfortunately engaged, I had hopes of being Clerk of the Closet to the present Prince of Wales, whenever he should come

into England. At his Royal Highness's arrival, I did make some attempts to succeed to that honour, as being the senior chaplain to the King that could attend such a service, and being chaplain seven years without any appointment; but the Rev. Mr. Maddox was the person then said to be fixed upon to attend the Prince. Mr. Dean Harris being lately promoted to the see of Llandaff, and quitting his duty and attendance at Court, Mr. Maddox was advanced to the Queen's Closet; upon this I most humbly hoped to succeed in a second application, which I made to Sir Robert Walpole, who was pleased to say the Queen had promised it to another person, and that he thought a new clerk was appointed to his Royal Highness. I could not, honoured Madam, have dared to ask your favour and interest in this matter, but your constant known and established inclinations to do good oblige me to lay this case before you, most humbly entreating your powerful assistance, to secure me some provision in the Church, if I may not have the honour of serving his Royal Highness. I am the only Chaplain out of his Royal Highness's dominion, and my brother has successively served in Parliament for near fifteen years.

I submit this, most honoured Madam, to the just and impartial scrutiny of your wisdom and goodness, and whatever the event may be, shall always wonder at and admire all your excellent and incomparable qualities, and pray for yours

and good Mr. Clayton's health and happiness, on whom attend my most humble duty and service, entreating of your Ladyship pardon for this trouble, and leave to be with all imaginable respect,

Madam,
Your most faithful, and
most obedient humble servant,
HUGH LEWIS.

The following portrait of a Court Chaplain, by the Rev. Charles Jenner, M.A., of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, a writer of considerable repute, from 1766 to 1774, when he died, may not be unacceptable to our readers:—

"Behold him now inured to courtly ground,
A constant dangler in the same dull round.
Deep read in Ecton; at his fingers' ends,
Preferments, values, old incumbents, friends;
With who stands first on every courtier's list,
Who's served, and who with promises dismissed;
With expectation sees each morn appear,
Though disappointment closes every year;
And still with crosses every hour perplext,
Rests well assured his turn must be the next.
If chance a country neighbour strays to town,
He singles out the antique wig and gown;
Turns Ciceroni to his wond'ring friend,
And points out all the court from end to end;
Tells who is in, and who is out of place,
And feasts upon a simper from his grace;
Explains the mystery of the wands and keys,
And ev'ry coloured ribbon that he sees;

More vain, alas! of this most useless knowledge,
Than all the learning that he brought from college.
Then having placed him in the foremost row,
To see the King pass by, and make his bow,
Announcing, as they pass, each lord and groom,
He next conducts him to the chaplain's room,
There vainly shows him how court chaplains dine,
And toasts a maid of honour in French wine.

Town Eclogues. 4to. 1772.

We have now to lay before our readers a series of letters from another reverend gentleman. That he sought to distinguish himself in Letters as well as in the favour of the Ladies of the Court, we have the authority of a memorandum on the back of one of his notes, which runs thus:—"From Dr. Marten, of Hammersmith, with a book of his own writings." What was the subject of the book we have not been able to ascertain.

REV. DR. MARTEN TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Windsor, August 10.

MADAM,

As soon as I received the honour of yours, I went to Windsor, and have waited on the Duchess of Bolton, to let her Grace know the commands I had received from you, to serve her Grace with everything in my power, and made an offer, in your name, of the house, the tickets, and my personal attendance. The Duchess said a thou-

sand good and true things of you, and gave me in charge to let you know how much she was obliged to you for your kind intentions; but, that her own house being so near, her relations would use them no farther than the tickets, and my attendance, which will be given with all pleasure imaginable.

I will, with your leave, Madam, (and I presume I have it,) either write or wait on Miss Dyves, with the offer of a bed, and will take all possible care of her while she remains here. I met Mr. Duck accidentally upon the road, after I had the honour of yours, and told him, that since you did not use your house in London, I apprehended he would be very welcome to a bed, which he did me the pleasure to accept. I shall think myself very happy, if you please to approve of what has been done by,

Madam,

Your most obliged, and
most obedient humble servant,
E. Marten.

I beg the favour of my most humble service to Mr. Clayton.

The Reverend Doctor's account of his interview with his Bishop, touching his anticipated preferment, was extremely encouraging; but we believe his Lordship did not approve of the Doctor for

the vacant Canonry, and otherwise disposed of it, as may be inferred from the letter which follows.

REVEREND DR. MARTEN TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Queen's-square.

MADAM,

According to your commands, I waited on the Bishop of London, at his return from the House, and informed his Lordship, that you was pleased to let me know, this morning, that I might depend upon your interest in reference to the Canonry of Windsor, and, that you expected his concurrence, as far as he had engaged; to which his Lordship replied, that having had obligations to the Court so lately in the person of his son-in-law, he did not care to ask anything. I then asked him,—if my having the Canonry of Windsor was proposed to him, whether he would declare, that it was agreeable to him, and that he wished it? To this he answered with repeating it—yes, certainly. I beg your pardon for the trouble of this, and depend entirely on your goodness, (not at all deserved) to,

Madam,

Your most obliged humble servant,

E. MARTEN.

Woolbeding, August 18.

MADAM,

On the 16th I received the honour of yours, dated the 9th, and shall always think myself very

much obliged to you for the advances you have already made, as well as for your great readiness to put the last hand to what you was, from your own goodness, pleased to begin, in my favour. And beg leave to let you know, that since mine of the 6th instant, I saw the Bishop of London, who told me, the vacant Prebend was disposed of, and said little more; so that I could not mention anything of this preferment to him. And, indeed, when I first applied to him, as I believe you must remember, I could never influence his Lordship any farther, than to a general recommendation, as a person not unqualified, if their Majesties should think fit to do me that honour, to be made a Prebendary of Westminster or Windsor. I then used all my interest with him, to be more explicit and particular in regard to either church, but could prevail nothing.

Thus, Madam, do I rather choose to submit the trouble I now give you to your leisure, than that you should think anything relating to the affair, either misrepresented, or concealed from you, by,

Madam,
Your most obliged
and most obedient
humble servant,
E. Marten.

The Doctor's disappointment must have been great, though he professes to be resigned to it.

His patroness ultimately rewarded him in the way he required, for he succeeded to the first vacant Prebendary at Windsor.

THE REV. DR. MARTEN TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Sussex, August 23.

MADAM,

I received the honour of both your letters and am not a little pleased, that you, who must be so perfect a judge in every part of good breeding, did not disapprove my conduct in sending the inclosed back again; and persuade myself, that if you please to reflect, under what government I passed above ten years of my life, you will soon allow me able to bear even a real disappointment with some tolerable degree of patience; but I can scarcely think, that what has now happened, deserves that name, since you are so good as to let me know, there remain so great hopes that it will succeed better another time.

If their Majesties' either honour or interest may be better advanced, by the preferment of other persons, I hope I have reason enough left, to enjoy a true satisfaction in whatever their wisdom shall judge most expedient; and can with truth affirm, that I never thought the event a proper standard to measure any one's good intentions. Give me leave to say, that notwithstanding I have so little deserved it, I feel within

myself that I have your interest, and remain in perfect ease and pleasure of mind,

Madam,
Your most obliged
and most obedient
humble servant,
E. MARTEN.

The following letter affords an instance of a conscientious clergyman in those corrupt days. We are bound to say it is the only one of the kind in this voluminous correspondence. We regret we can furnish little information respecting this clerical *rara avis:* but we believe that he was Vicar of Cranbrook, in the Diocese of Canterbury, and published a collection of Ecclesiastical Laws in two volumes. An account of his life was prefixed to his Posthumous Tracts, published in 1748.

THE REV. JOHN JOHNSON, M.A., TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Durham, October 6.

MADAM,

I never took pen to write in so much concern as now, for when I did myself the honour (last post) to write to your Ladyship, out of the highest sense of gratitude, I offered that sum to your disposal, not thinking it had come within the oath against Simony, which I then thought had only

related to those persons who have the gift or nomination, but upon perusing the words of the oath, it extends to all promises to persons using their interest for procuring or obtaining any preferment. This being so, I humbly beg your Ladyship will please to pardon the trouble which I have given you, and to drop the affair, for I had rather want any preferment than go against my conscience; but, as I shall have the most grateful sentiments for whatever shall be done for me at any time, so shall study to make the most generous returns, though not allowed to be engaged by promise. Madam, I apply to your candour and generosity to put a favourable construction, and not let me lose the favour and friendship of the best friend that ever man could boast of, and you will infinitely oblige,

Madam,

Your most obliged

and most obedient servant,

J. Johnson.

I desire my last and this may be burned, lest they fall into improper hands.

I shall live as one under sentence of condemnation till I receive my pardon.

The interview of Père Courayer with Queen Caroline, alluded to in the following communication, will allow of a word or two being added to what has already been said respecting this respectable ecclesiastic. Peter Francis le

Courayer was Canon Regular, and Librarian of St. Genevieve at Paris. He published in French "A Defence of the Validity of English Ordinations, and of the Succession of the Bishops in England,"—a remarkable work from a Roman Catholic—which was immediately translated into English, and obtained for the author the degree of Doctor of Divinity from the University of Oxford,—an honour equally remarkable, coming from a Protestant University. He afterwards wrote a letter in English to Whiston, and resided for some time in the house Walpole subsequently made famous by the name of Strawberry Hill.

ANTHONY DUNCOMBE TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Barford, September 12.

MADAM,

I am so deeply indebted to you for the many favours I received at Windsor, that I must ever remain so, if you have not charity enough to accept of my acknowledgments in part of payment. If I might have my wish, I would not desire a discharge in full, because a grateful mind is never more happy than to be thus owing and thus a-paying.

The great condescension and goodness with which the Queen was pleased to receive Père Courayer has filled him with the highest sense of gratitude, and he will think himself amply repaid

for all his misfortunes if he can do anything worthy of her Majesty. The kind manner with which you received him, and the hopes of improving your acquaintance are obligations never to be forgot by him.

If I could not gratify my inclination in paying my duty longer to their Majesties, it was a mortification no one can be so sensible of as myself. I could add no grandeur or happiness to them, but by returning home, I could relieve a friend who suffers much through ill health. My wife desires you will accept of her most humble service, and I am with the greatest respect,

Madam,

Your most obedient,

and most obliged humble servant,

ANTHONY DUNCOMBE.

The Bishop of Killala is merely introduced here to usher the Bishop of Clonfert's letter. A full account of him will be found in the following chapter.

BISHOP OF KILLALA TO MRS. CLAYTON.

MADAM,

The desire that I have of always assuring you of my sincere gratitude for the many obligations which you have heaped upon me, makes me willing to lay hold of any pretence for troubling Mrs. Clayton with a letter, and readily to embrace

this opportunity of sending you the inclosed from Dr. Synge, now Bishop of Clonfert, who is best able to express his own sentiments upon this occasion. I have been detained longer in this town than I proposed at my coming over, but hope to be able to set out for Killala in two or three days. My wife joins in presenting her most humble service to you and Mr. Clayton, together with your

Most obliged, and
obedient humble servant,
ROBERT KILLALA.

BISHOP OF CLONFERT TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Dublin, June 27, 1730.

MADAM,

To lie under great obligations without acknowledging them is grievous to the person obliged, yet to acknowledge them is to give new trouble to the benefactor. I have long laboured under this difficulty, but I cannot longer resist the strong motions of gratitude in my breast, and my good friend the Bishop of Killala has encouraged me to take this liberty. As his friendship opened the way for me to yours, I earnestly begged him to convey my acknowledgments to you; but he bid me make them myself, and encouraged me to hope they would be favourably received.

Suffer me, then, Madam, to return you my most sincere and humble thanks for your great

goodness to me. I well know how much I am indebted to that for my advancement; but this, though far above my deserts, or even my hopes, I look upon as the least considerable effect of your kindness. You have done me a much more important service—you have cleared my reputation from one of the worst imputations, and, I will venture to say, the most undeserved. I say this, because I can easily show, that I have on all occasions given the strongest public proofs of a most zealous and hearty affection to his Majesty and his Royal house—proofs which could not be calculated for this or any other interested occasion. But you, Madam, have made this unnecessary; you have set me right in the opinion of her Majesty, for whom, ever since I had some years ago the honour to kiss her hand, I have, as every one who sees her must have, the most profound reverence. And though I am far from pretending to be void of an honest (I hope it is only an honest) ambition, yet I assure you, that I set a much greater value on this happy effect of your kindness, than on the other.

It would, I fear, be an act of high presumption in me, to desire to trouble her Majesty even with thanks; but I hope I may be allowed to say, that however upon other accounts I am unworthy of their Majesties' favour, yet as to loyalty and strong affection to their Majesties' interests, I will not give place to the most loyal; and if it pleases God to bless me with life and health, I shall en-

deavour to make good my professions by suitable actions.

And give me leave, Madam, to assure you, that I have the deepest sense of your great goodness to me, and I shall be ready on all occasions to show that I am, with the most profound respect and gratitude,

Madam,
Your most obliged, and
most obedient humble servant,
EDWARD CLONFERT.

The writer, Dr. Edward Synge, was successively Bishop of Clonfert, Cloyne, Leighlin and Ferns, and Elphin. Irish Bishoprics and Archbishoprics appear to have been pretty well divided amongst this family. His grandfather was Bishop of Limerick, and afterwards of Cork, Cloyne, and Ross; his father, Bishop of Raphoe, and subsequently Archbishop of Tuam; his great uncle, George Bishop of Cloyne, was nominated Archbishop of Tuam, and his brother, Nicholas, was Bishop of Killala.

The following letter appears to be signed F. Lewis, though on the back it is attributed to the Rev. Dr. Lewis. It is evident that the writer had been employed to advance the education of Stephen Duck. If not the writer of a preceding

communication, he may have been Francis Lewis, of Chiswick, the translator of Aristænetus, and of the mottoes to the Rambler, who is the only scholar of the same Christian name of whom we can find any notice. If this be the individual, all we can say of him must be in the words of Dr. Johnson to Malone: — "Sir, he lived in London, and hung loose upon society."

REV. DR. LEWIS TO MRS. CLAYTON.

February 19, 1730.

Honoured Madam,

My dutiful thanks for your most obliging message by Stephen Duck to me should have been personally acknowledged much sooner, but as impertinent visits are always troublesome to persons of your great judgment and high station, so I thought a diligent and careful attendance on the work you were pleased to set me here, would be more acceptable to you; and I even rejoice at the progress we have made, and that your Ladyship will have the pleasure of seeing poor Stephen a considerable proficient in the Latin tongue sooner than can well be imagined.

I submit, most excellent Madam, my own affair to your great goodness, and doubt not of success, since God has blessed me with such an advocate.

I am, Madam, with the deepest sense of duty and respect to good Mr. Clayton and yourself,

Your Ladyship's most faithful,
and most obedient humble servant,
F. Lewis.

The lady of the Lord Chancellor was sometimes a necessary agent in these transactions, and it appears that she was also a very obliging one.

LADY KING TO MRS. CLAYTON.

London, July 10, 1733.

Madam,

I had the pleasure of your letter, and you may depend upon my Lord's not disposing of the living till he has your orders. I was just going out of town when I had the notice of its being void, and fear the great hurry I was in when I wrote last to you, made me omit mentioning, it was one of the livings upon the list you gave me, for which reason I hope it is worth your friend's taking, but whether it be or no, this I am sure, that no one can have a greater satisfaction in executing your commands, than,

Dear Madam,
Your most obedient humble servant,
Anne King.

It is unusual to see the wishes of royalty de-

clined, but this is clearly done in the note that follows. It is from the pen of Henrietta, only daughter and heiress of John Holles, last Duke of Newcastle, of that family, and wife of Edward, second Earl of Oxford. The "Peggy," whose disappointment is referred to, was their daughter Margaret Cavendish, afterwards Duchess of Portland.

COUNTESS OF OXFORD TO MRS. CLAYTON.

Wimpole, October 21, 1733.

MADAM,

I received the favour of your letter on Friday, and take the first opportunity to make you my acknowledgments for it, and desire you will present both my Lord's duty and mine to the Queen, and thanks for the honour she has done our daughter, in thinking of her to attend the Princess Royal, upon her marriage. We are sorry to deny her the pleasure, but our private business in the country, and my own want of health, has much confined me within doors since I left London. I am now very far from well, which must induce us to give Peggy this disappointment, who I guess, you will imagine, will think it some trial of her patience. I think it was my misfortune that I did not see you before I came out of town. I am heartily sorry to hear you are not well, I hope you will

take care of yourself; there are many you will oblige in doing it, and no one more than

Dear Madam,

Your faithful friend and
humble servant,
H. Cavendish Holles Oxford.

My Lord and my daughter are yours and Mr. Clayton's humble servants. My humble service to Mr. Clayton.

We cannot close this series better than (though a little out of date) with the following lively illustration of a cathedral city, from the pen of one of the most observant of Lady Sundon's correspondents.

MRS. DUNCOMBE TO LADY SUNDON.

October 24.

Having lately had a letter from Lord Hervey with an account of his summer visits, and a touch at the same time of the reasons which carried him those rounds, he concludes with Bedfordshire, and sweetly dropped that that visit was from choice, taste and inclination. Now, is it possible, Madam, to have such an idea presented of you by such a pen, and not long to own the same taste and inclination over and over; though, indeed, beforehand with him in it, as I am much in life itself. What a paradise was Sundon when ye both were

there, converting a *cœur ouverte* without the interruption of ceremonies or fiddle-faddles. I take so great a share in the pleasure he expresses to have had there, that, like all the world, I want more and cannot be satisfied till I hear you speak, and share also in the pleasure you must have had whilst he was with you. Spare me therefore a few moments, but when you do, mention not, I beg, the loss I had by him, in not accepting your kind offer of being at Sundon whilst you was there, for when I missed being with you, and you alone, the cup was full and could receive no more. I have not yet seen your godson, nor his mamma, but I met Mr. Smallridge by chance one day, and by his make he seems to me not likely to be long amongst us—us, I mean, who walk on the surface of the earth, and so I find most people think, who see him without the covering of his gown; both he and she are here well spoke on, but were he an angel, as a prebend, they would be glad to lose him, so many are waiting for removes of that sort. For my part, I have cause to be sorry for the last that happened; for the prebend lately dead belonged to the house I am at present in, and probably by his death I must remove out of it, and, consequently out of the College, there being no other house belonging to it that has any part to let but this, and this seeming small evil carries a great deal with it; for on acquaintance with places as with persons, intolerable things often appear unseen at first, so has my knowledge happened to

increase of Worcester Town, which, all but this spot of holy ground, proves a most abominable, close, stinking, dirty place, the inhabitants being a working, moyling people, who work and eat, and sleep, and think on nothing else; and for the idle part thereof, bred in or near it, they know no better, and believe it the finest part of the world; which, I suppose, occasions the many high reports that are of it at a distance, and did I not now speak safe, I would not speak so much truth, for never should I be forgiven were my reports known; however, as St. Paul's lesson for content is here, meat and clothing, I was content with my room, my lime tree, and my prospect, which were conversation to me, and when I lose it, I intend to be content; for I am weary of the universal grumblings of all mortals, and therefore will not add to the harsh sound; besides, none will venture down amongst us this winter, and who knows what six months may bring forth. I may be where my old landlord now is, and want no space to breathe in; but as I breathe well at present, give me leave to add a few lines more to thank you, dear Madam, for a civility, which I am sure I owe to your obliging nature, received from Lady Jekill, who wrote to her sister, Lady Williams, that lives here, in concern for my health, and liking of the place, which, from the Lady of the Rolls, in this country gave me great honour. And, as I say, this must come on your account, because I remember not to have met her in any place but with you, and

this belief gave the salt to it; for I do assure you that I value every mite of inclination that comes from you, before the appearance of golden ingots from thousand others, your favours great and small having no alloy of insincerity in them. I stop, though untired, and could enlarge on the subject with great pleasure to myself, but yourself and ease shall always be preferred in the thoughts of

Madam,

Your most affectionate
and faithful servant,
S. DUNCOMBE.

END OF VOL. I.

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